UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
RAY LYMAN WILBUR, Secretary
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
WILLIAM JOHN COOPER, Commissioner

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# THE ACTIVITY PROGRAM AND THE TEACHING OF READING

## MANUAL FOR KINDERGARTEN AND PRIMARY TEACHERS

DEVELOPED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE CALIFORNIA CURRICULUM COMMISSION, CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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# CONTENTS

# LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

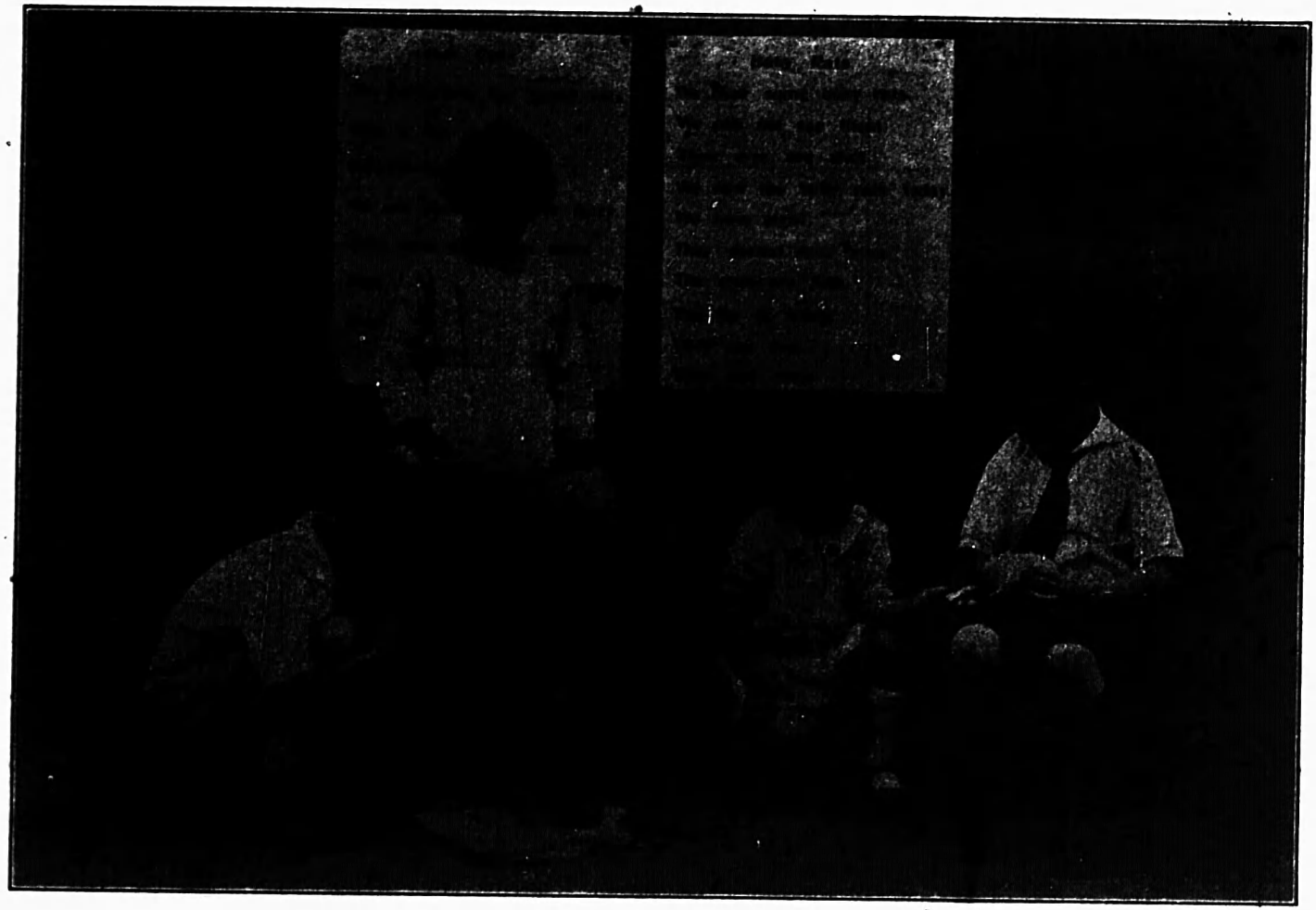
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF EDUCATION,
*Washington, D. C., March 24, 1931.*

SIR: Last June I transmitted a manuscript entitled "Teacher's Guide to Child Development" with an explanation that it was taken from a much larger manuscript prepared by California teachers under the direction of the California Curriculum Commission. In the belief that many teachers in other States who could not secure the California unabridged edition would like to use this work, both for its own worth and as a model for their work in curriculum construction, I urged its printing as a bulletin of this office. This belief has been found well warranted in the sales of 2,000 copies within two months, making necessary a second printing. Such demand leads me to feel that similar success awaits the publication of the material herewith transmitted. I recommend that it be issued as a bulletin under the title "The Activity Program and the Teaching of Reading," with full acknowledgment to the California Commission.

Respectfully submitted.

WM. JOHN COOPER,
*Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.



Reading experiences growing out of children's interests

# INTRODUCTION

## The Contribution of Reading to the Child's Development

The driving purpose of the young child is that of finding out about his environment and of adapting himself to it so that satisfaction results. In the home or schoolroom which allies itself with this purpose, the child soon discovers that reading is a valuable aid to carrying out his plans. At the beginning of the period of conscious observation, the young child is confronted with tangible results of great advances recently made in science and the industrial world. He observes and wonders over the electric light, the automobile, the street car, the airplane, the daily milk delivery, prepared foods in packages, electrical appliances used in the home, the steam shovel at work in the neighborhood. In addition, he sees birds in motion, flowers growing, animals, and people engaged in many interesting pursuits he wishes to know more about. He is alive with curiosity about all these commonplace factors of his life. When he tries to investigate them, there is much for him to learn. He knows nothing about their sources or processes. His experiences are all with results of processes.

Gradually widening experiences bring him new facts relating to these things. If the right kind of stories and poems are told or read to him, he sees that books also bring information. He enjoys pictures of all the everyday things with which he is familiar. He likes to imitate his father and look at the newspaper, often pretending to read from it. He is beginning to sense the importance of reading.

Reading is an important part of the modern child's environment. He is aware of its constant practice by adults all around him. There is a reason for this. Invention, scientific investigation, large-scale production, improved communication have created a new world. The number of things one must know about in order to understand this world has been enormously increased. No one can hope to learn of them all through first-hand experiences. Printed matter, which preserves and facilitates widespread distribution of knowledge, becomes a necessity. With increased reading comes a more widespread realization of the importance of understanding the thought life of the world, as well as its physical development. Only through reading may one hope for knowledge of the processes and stages by which such vital forces as philosophy, religion, literature, music, and art have developed. Only through achieving this knowledge may one come truly to enjoy them as they exist in modern life.

The advance in mechanical production of printed matter, together with this great increase in demand for it, has resulted in a vast amount of general reading. Millions read to-day where in the past only a few had the time, the facilities, and the necessity for reading. The evidence of this is all about us. Scores of morning and evening papers are delivered daily to homes. An increasing number of magazines flaunt before competitors such figures as these: "Over 3,000,000 circulated weekly." There is hardly a drug store or news stand in existence that does not boast a corner flanked to the ceiling with its bewildering variety of highly-colored periodicals. Indefatigably, the book reviewers send out their monthly lists of new books. Publishers vie with one another in placing on the market readable editions of classics, old and new, at prices which enable people of even moderate incomes to own large collections. There are books available, and increasingly used, in every field of man's activity. Day by day, year by year, this flood of printing is growing in volume. Truly the age of reading is upon us.

These facts are of significance for the teacher as well as the child. They result in creating in more children the sense of the importance of reading. They result in two insistent demands upon the school program:

1. Much reading is an essential condition of full, complete development of the child.

2. The child needs to form habits which insure that his reading will be *varied, discriminating, and continuous* throughout life.

In the school which gives children freedom and assistance to carry out their purposes, they naturally come to see that reading is a needed tool basically related to everything they do. They begin to make it a part of all their "purposeful activities." They want to use it, and they are willing to work hard to learn how. As they do learn how, and as they continue to experience the vital importance of reading, they extend reading activity into every field of their advancing knowledge. This is the desired end before teachers in "reading instruction."

If children come to this end naturally through carrying on activities, does the teacher have anything at all to do with it? Yes; a very great deal. The teacher has everything to do, in the first place, with creating that atmosphere in which children freely plan and carry out their activities. In the second place, the teacher can do much to help children realize the value of reading, so that they develop strong motives for it. In the third place, the teacher can guide children in their efforts to learn to read so that they avoid forming habits which will handicap them, and so that they acquire real skill and lasting interest in reading.

To extend the child's experiences, to teach him *how to acquire and use* knowledge in order to further his experiences and understand them—these are objectives of paramount importance before the school to-day. It is evident that these objectives can be attained only through practice in acquiring and using knowledge in relation to the extension of experiences, in solving problems, or fulfilling purposes of the child. Let us see what this implies in the matter of helping children to use the tool, reading.

# THE ACTIVITY PROGRAM AND THE TEACHING OF READING[1]

## Chapter I

### How the Teacher Helps Children to Realize the Value of Reading, and to Prepare Themselves for It

#### CHILDREN NEED PREPARATION FOR READING

If you had never seen a quillopeep, and there were no pictures available for you to examine, or no quillopeeps in your neighborhood, you could interpret this word only by means of what you read or of what people told you about it. Your idea would be composed of several other ideas with which you had already had experience. If these previous ideas were not true, no doubt you would be much surprised when you finally saw a genuine quillopeep.

Thus, the reading of any word involves its interpretation in terms of previous experiences, and the interpretation is clear in proportion to the reality of these experiences. This is the simple reason why children must see, touch, taste, smell, and otherwise experience the characteristics of many things before words can mean anything to them. They need to understand ideas before they can interpret the symbols standing for them. Reading is as much a process of putting meaning into the printed page as of getting meaning out of it. To be able to read much one needs "many correct concepts of common things."

But reading involves not only interpreting words that stand for various concepts, it involves the use of words in many intricate relationships. To understand a sentence describing the habits of the bear, for instance, such as "The bear goes into hibernation during the winter," requires not only an understanding of separate words, but also a knowledge of how words, when put together in phrases and sentences, make new meanings.

Nearly all children acquire this knowledge to a very limited extent before they enter school through hearing others talk and talking themselves. They also acquire some ability to think or to use ideas to solve the problems they encounter as they pass from infancy to childhood. But even the simplest material the child finds in his first book

[1] The material in this bulletin constitutes Chapter VIII of Teachers' Guide to Child Development, California State Department of Education, Sacramento, Calif., 1930.

will involve the use of words in relationships new to him. The larger his fund of ideas and the more practice he has had in using these, the more able he will be to grasp new meanings he will find in books. It follows that the more practice a child has in talking and thinking about what he sees, hears, experiences, the more clear-cut all new meanings become to him and the better prepared he is to interpret the phrases and sentences that express them.

Reading, in addition, is a difficult skill to acquire. It requires the formation of so many new habits, both muscular and mental, that concentrated, purposeful, and sustained efforts are needed. Unless the habits upon which it depends are correctly formed it becomes so arduous that efforts to keep it up are often abandoned, and we have the result of many adults for whom reading is practically a minor activity, used only when absolutely necessary.

This is why it is vital that children first approach the task of learning to read with a very high interest in, and a very strong desire for, doing so. Only a powerful motive, a genuine, vivid realization of the delights readers enjoy will carry them through the great difficulties ahead of them. It seems, then, that there is preparation needed by all children for the undertaking of reading.

Until recently, our first-grade programs have been built on the assumption that children have had this preparation and are "ready" to learn to read when they come to school. It has been assumed that experiences in the home have been sufficient, and the matter of whether or not children really wanted to learn to read has not been given much consideration.

There is an appallingly large number of "failures" among first-grade children. We know that, under our previous school plan, these failures were largely due to children's inability to meet the requirements set for them in reading skill. To-day thoughtful teachers everywhere are questioning the advisability of teaching reading at the very beginning of the first grade. Many studies of this problem have resulted in the conclusion that children learn to read much more readily and pleasurably, that they develop good attitudes toward reading much more surely, and make more rapid progress *if teachers wait until they are fully ready to undertake it before beginning its definite instruction.*

## WHAT CONSTITUTES PREPARATION FOR READING?

In what does the desired preparation consist? Such an excellent inventory of conditions leading to readiness for reading has been given in Anderson and Davidson,[1] Reading Objectives, that we feel it is worth quoting at length:

[1] Anderson, C. J., and Davidson, Isobel. Reading Objectives. Laurel Book Co., New York, 1925, pp. 27-29.

A. Being in an environment which fosters and stimulates a child's natural curiosity.
   1. The wonderful world, a constant source of wonder—observing persons and things in relation to self.
   2. Inquiring and investigating—asking at first, *what;* later, *why;* and still later, *how.*
   3. Desiring to find out about things—sometimes destructive, sometimes structive, coupled with a desire to master everything about him.
   4. Becoming sensitive to surroundings—nature: Wind, water, sky, earth, rocks, heat, cold, etc.

B. Being in an environment which encourages or invites conversation and enlarges child's vocabulary.
   1. Playing with other children.
   2. Observing nature—outdoor plays, excursions to the woods, the zoo, park, circus, the country, etc.
   3. Taking care of pets, toys, baby sister or brother.
   4. Talking with older people who are sympathetic and helpful.

C. Being in an environment which provides opportunity for handling and manipulating things. Creative activity finds outlet in the following experiences.
   1. Coming in contact with things and using them for some definite purpose.
   2. Making or constructing, whether it is creating a play or making a box, in response to a felt need.

D. Being in an environment rich in good pictures, good music, good books. Emotional reactions—appreciations and attitudes.
   1. Listening to good music, to stories told and read, to nursery rhymes and simple verses.
   2. Enjoying good pictures, music, stories, poems.
   3. Singing short songs, learning and reciting rhymes and jingles.
   4. Dramatizing a story or activities observed in the environment.
   5. Telling parts of stories told or read, or a story imagined.

E. Being in an environment in which an older person, parent, or older child (or teacher) reads. Social imitation stimulates desire to do what others do.
   1. Finding pleasure in pretending to read.
   2. Looking on while another reads.
   3. Finding great enjoyment in having someone read stories and poems, both new and old.
   4. Talking about story and dramatizing it.

F. Being in an environment which stimulates interest in reading activities.
   1. Observing signs, labels, house numbers, names of streets, telephone numbers, names of trolley lines, grocery firms; notices such as *Stop, Danger, Look Out;* printed matter such as names of newspapers, magazines, etc.
   2. Associating words with pictures on toys, blocks, games, pictures in alphabet and picture books.
   3. Recognizing his own name * * *, names of the family (and classmates).
   4. Taking an interest in printing such words as his own name, *Daddy, Mother, Love;* in writing a letter to an absent member of the family (or class) using pictures to convey the message.
   5. Noticing lists of articles on slip when sent on errands to the grocery, or store; identifying magazines, victrola records, books, etc.

6. Attending moving pictures or studying a series of pictures to get the story. Reading the legend underneath the picture by the picture story.
7. Playing card games which involve matching; putting puzzles together; playing language games with older children.
8. Arranging color cards, beads, sticks, blocks, etc., in order; arranging alphabet blocks, number cards in order, arranging names of the family.
9. Making collections of pictures and classifying them. Collecting other objects and classifying them.
10. Drawing pictures to tell people of things actually seen, or of things imagined or gathered from stories. Telling stories about the picture which an older person writes below the picture.
11. Making booklets, containing objects, such as leaves, flowers, drawings, words, and sentences written or printed by an older person.
12. Doing many things in response to directions given, to signals gestures, etc.
13. Noticing characteristic sounds in nature industry, in speech, and taking pleasure in imitating them.

In good homes, where parents are educated and possess wide interests, children may, and often do, have much of this needed preliminary help. But such homes are still in the minority, and the larger number of children come to school without it.

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE KINDERGARTEN TO READING READINESS

The well-planned kindergarten program, offering as it should rich and varied experiences related to children's interests, can do much toward developing an interest in, and a background for, reading. It will help the kindergarten teacher to understand this responsibility if she will study carefully the above definite inventory of conditions which prepare children for reading. The kindergarten which provides, extends, and enriches such conditions is not only giving children opportunity for full development, but is also building in them a sense of the importance and value of learning to read.

### Suggestions for Providing This Preparation

Let us study a typical kindergarten activity to see just how it has contributed to the preparation of children for learning to read. The activity will first be fully described by the teacher who guided its development:

#### BUILDING A STEAMER AND GOING TO JAPAN [3]

The children were seated around the teacher at the time of their discussion period (near the beginning of the morning) to make plans for their day's work. The school is situated in a district of the city where Japanese people live, and many Japanese children were in the kinder-

[3] Activity carried on under direction of, and reported by, Miss Lucille Walker, in the kindergarten of the Raphael Weill School, San Francisco. Report contributed by Miss Julia Letheld Hahn, director of kindergarten-primary education.

garten. One little Japanese girl, who was a general favorite, was leaving to go back to Japan. The children were talking about this, interest was high, and there was a lively discussion. They talked about what kind of a boat the little girl was going on, where she would sleep and eat while on the boat, what the boat would take to Japan, and what it would bring back to America. The children had just finished work on a piece of construction with which they had been engaged for some time, and were eager to start something "new." The talk turned to what were to be their plans for the day. One child, as so often happened in similar situations during the year, asked, "What shall we build now?" Quickly came the suggestion from the other children, "Let's build the boat that is going to Japan." It was received with great enthusiasm.

"Where shall we build it?" asked the teacher, and the planning began. Much thinking and discussion were needed to decide upon the best place in the room for the boat. The whole group finally walked about their room, carefully considering the advantages of each suggested place. The boat was to be large enough for the children to use, so its location must be planned with reference to the needs for room space for their other activities.

When the location had been selected, the children started to plan the building. They talked about how they were to find out about building the boat. It was suggested that they could look at pictures of boats, and some child asked if they could go to the docks to look at a real boat (the group had taken trips to "find out" before). As soon as possible, they went to the docks. The teacher was unable to arrange that they go on board a ship, so they stood on the docks looking at a big steamer near by, talking over all the various parts of a boat and their uses. They discussed such things as the anchor, the engine rooms, the decks, the cabins, and the captain's room. Meanwhile children each morning were bringing in pictures of boats. The teacher brought some big posters, supplied by steamship companies that have pictures of boats and of the countries to which they go. The children looked at these and discussed what parts their boat should have, while they were trying out ways of building it.

At first they built the boat of construction blocks, but they soon discovered that there were not enough blocks for making all the parts needed. After considering available materials, ways and means, and after much discussion, it was decided to use some of the children's little tables for the main deck of the steamer.

The tables were covered with heavy cardboard to protect them. This gave a good foundation upon which to build the cabins and pilot house and still left space all around for a promenade deck. Laths were used in the construction of the staterooms. Each stateroom was furnished with a bed, made of building blocks, and linen made of

paper, pillows and mattress stuffed with paper, a washbowl, mirror, and toothbrush. (The children suggested, planned, and arranged these furnishings.)

In the captain's cabin the children built a large wheel made from the top of a barrel so that it really revolved. There was a compass too, and a large map cut out from an old book was tacked on the wall. The children talked about what maps were for; they made steamer chairs of blocks and laths, a radio, and magazines (scrapbooks of travel pictures) for the afterdeck. They attempted a gangplank and found it very difficult to make. Every time some one used it it fell down, because it was not strong enough to hold the weight of a child. For several days it had to be rebuilt each day, and the children disliked to allow the biggest child in the room to use it. They tried different ways of building it, but did not seem to think of any other means of giving it strength. Finally, in a discussion period, the teacher asked them what they were going to do about such a poor gangplank. Some child said, "We could bring boxes to put under it." Next morning boxes began to appear, and finally the gangplank was strongly supported and all could use it without fear of breaking it.

The gangplank was finally strong enough to hold the heaviest child

Work on the boat required nearly four weeks, and the interest in it lasted much longer. There were many trips taken, and much activity related to the boat. Everyone took pride in keeping it "shipshape"; habits of cleanliness were actually strengthened through dramatic play at housekeeping on the boat; and there were many valuable opportunities for expression of ideas and experiences.

When the boat was completed interest turned to things to wear and things to take on an ocean voyage. The children decided to take suit cases, trunks, hand bags, hats, and money. The crew decked themselves out in sailor suits, ties, and hats, and of course there was a marine band with costumes and instruments. Then the question arose as to where the boat would land and where the passengers would visit in Japan. Of all the nice places talked about, the Japanese tea garden seemed to have the most votes.

This involved a trip to Golden Gate Park to see a real tea garden. The children had tea cakes and sat on the grass taking in all the beauty of the garden and discussing the way in which the bridge and house were made.

The next day they wanted to start a tea garden of their own. It was a very pretty little spot in the room when finished and held many of the beauties seen in the park. The children had brought real moss and flowers to add a touch of reality, had made careful plans and worked hard to make their tea garden lovely. They were so successful that it seemed natural that they should want to share its beauties; so they decided to make kimonos and invite their mothers to come to a tea party in the garden. This was a delightful consummation of all their activity, for it had carried them clear through the term. The work on the boat and tea garden, with the dramatic play centering in them, had engaged the group for six weeks.

The outcomes were valuable. Specific outcomes are suggested by the list that follows:

1. Willingness of each to cooperate with whole group.
2. Feeling responsibility to contribute to project.
3. Appreciation of the value of boats and man's work on them.
4. Appreciation of the value of learning to read, to use numbers, etc.
5. Appreciation of work of others.
6. Appreciation of joy in creative effort.

A. Habits were fostered:

1. Going to books for information.
2. Going to the source for information (trips to the boat and the Japanese tea garden).
3. Persisting in work in spite of difficulties.
4. Exercising judgment in selecting materials.
5. Learning to criticize results of effort, and so to raise one's own standards.
6. Using ideas and past experiences in new activities.
7. Planning.
8. Exercising self-control.
9. Being helpful.
10. Acquiring habits of cleanliness and neatness.

B. There was a gain in knowledge; a growth of new interests:

1. Understanding of the purpose of the boats that were a part of their every-day environment.

2. Some knowledge of how people travel

3. Some knowledge of how boats are constructed—of their plan.

4. A beginning knowledge of the customs and land of the Japanese.

5. Knowledge of how people are made comfortable while traveling on boats.

6. Knowledge of the purpose of maps and compass.

7. Interest in boats and where they go; in other forms of transportation.

8. Interest in all the information and skills needed to make the boat a good one.

9. Interest in parks.

C. Subject matter contributed in the following ways:

1. Spoken language:

Conversation about the activity was spontaneous and many of the children who had never participated in group discussions before were talking freely and eagerly before the enterprises were finished.

2. Vocabulary:

The children's vocabulary was greatly improved and their grammar somewhat corrected, as for example, in such phrases: "The boat sailed." "We went sailing." They learned countless new words—sailor, captain, anchor, life-saver, lifeboat, porthole, radio, smokestack, stateroom, berths, washstand, deck, gangplank, ocean, waves, Japan, are typical.

There was improvement in the recognition of phonic differences. The pronunciation of first letters and word endings was better.

3. Reading experiences:

Signs on officers' hats, Japanese tea garden, staterooms, numbers, band members. Enjoyment of stories.

4. Number experiences:

Number work included counting numbers of passengers, etc.; number of smokestacks, number in crew, number of life preservers and lifeboats. Number of tea cups, spoons, napkins needed for the party. Measuring paper for kimonos, sailor suits, laths for staterooms, etc.

5. Experiences in music:

There was much expression in rhythms—interpretation of the movement of the boat; a Japanese dance in the garden; keeping time with the marine band; and so on.

There were tone drills based on the boat whistle; calling "all ashore," "all aboard" during dramatic plays; bird calls in the garden.

6. Other experiences:

Opportunities to manipulate and become acquainted with material were plentiful—with blocks, laths, paper, pails, paint, mats, cardboard boxes, tools, clay, and so on

Opportunities for the development of initiative were present throughout because the enterprise was planned and carried on by the children.

## SITUATIONS PROVIDED BY THIS ACTIVITY

The teacher's statement of outcomes reveals the situations provided for the children that helped to prepare them for reading. Let us consider these in the terms of the inventory quoted on page 3. Among the most evident were:

A. Being in an environment which fosters and stimulates a child's natural curiosity.

The plan to build a boat aroused the need to find out how real boats were constructed, and led to investigating boats through the trip to the dock. Desiring to find out about a boat's furnishings led to bringing in pictures of boats and discussing their parts; the question of maps and their uses arose naturally; inquiries were made as to where to land the boat and where they were to visit in Japan; this led to the desire to find out about a Japanese tea garden and the trip to investigate one.

Through these means the children were becoming sensitive to their surroundings, and were learning about many new things which would lead them to be curious about still others.

B. Being in an environment which encourages and invites conversation and enlarges the child's vocabulary.

The need for making plans, asking questions, discussing and describing provided many opportunities for spontaneous conversation when children were learning to speak in simple sentences with ease and freedom.

Through looking at the boats, at pictures describing them, through discussing plans for their own boat and deciding the parts it was to have, came the need and the opportunity to acquire many new words. Note the teachers' report of this in C, point 2, page 11.

C. Being in an environment which provides opportunity for handling and manipulating things.

The construction problems involved in the activity led to the need and opportunity to work with many different kinds of materials. (See C, point 6, p. 12.)

D. Being in an environment rich in good pictures, good music, good books. Emotional reactions—appreciations and attitudes.

The teacher reports that pictures were made available and were used; that there were expressions in rhythms and music; that there was enjoyment of stories, and much dramatic play, all brought about

by the needs experienced through the children's purpose to make a boat.

E. Being in an environment in which an older person reads.

The teacher supplied posters of steamship companies, read stories and poems related to the children's new interests.

F. Being in an environment which stimulates interest in reading activities.

While the teacher does not specifically say so, we are led to infer, from her statement of outcomes, that the children had many experiences through which they would be led to realize the value of reading; the observing of signs and their uses; looking at pictures and posters, and feeling a need to read their labels; seeing that books told them about how people travel, about customs and land of the Japanese; looking at magazines and making scrapbooks of travel for their boat; observing sounds and attempting to imitate them in their tone drills. Note that many of these situations were natural results of the purpose to make a boat; that the children were led to them through the teacher's sensitiveness to reading situations.

All extension on children's experiences must result inevitably in their being better prepared for the process of reading. But such preparation can be greatly facilitated if the teacher is conscious of and makes use of these opportunities offered by the program of guided experiences. We have seen that when children undertake a worth-while activity, innumerable other enterprises of small scope may spring up, some related distinctly to the central interest, some unrelated but perhaps suggested by it, some begun by individual children as a result of the stimulating atmosphere of the classroom and the freedom to initiate. All these enterprises of less scope may also bring children face to face with the need for reading; they also provide situations in which reading is naturally a part of pleasurable experience, so enhancing its value.

A few illustrations of these facts are presented in the following records of less extensive enterprises carried on by kindergarten children:

### HOW ALL THE ACTIVITIES OF A KINDERGARTEN YEAR INVOLVED GROWTH OF INTEREST IN AND PREPARATION FOR READING [1]

In another kindergarten the following activities and situation were found rich in possibilities for developing "reading readiness" and led to actual first steps:

A. Purposeful activities initiated and planned by children such as—

1. Making buildings for a play community.

[1] Adapted from a report of activities in the training school kindergarten, State Teachers College, San Jose, contributed by Miss Marion F. Butman, supervisor of the kindergarten.

(*a*) Building of gas station. This involved much free discussion, much hard thinking through problems, as well as experience with words in numbering and labeling, such as "cash register"; "gas, 21¢"; "garage."

(*b*) Building of an airplane garage which had the name "Monterey Lindy Airplane" printed on it.

(*c*) Building of fire houses. This involved the making of signs to warn people, such as "Fire house"; "Keep out." Charts recording the steps in building were printed by the teacher.

2. Making a garden involved discussions of plans, solution of problems, and other experiences with words in labeling flower seeds that were planted, as "Sweet peas."

3. Enjoying experiences with nature. Trips, the bringing of flowers and pets to school, etc., were followed by discussions of them. Stories related to such experiences were then read to children. Many new experiences were thus provided involving growth in thinking, talking, and enjoyment of books.

B. Contributing enterprises related to the larger activities:

1. Making scrapbooks.

Scrapbooks were made from children's original drawings and from pictures which the children cut out. Simple sentences were written under them which were usually composed by the children.

2. Telling original stories.

As the child told his story it was written down by the teacher. This was sometimes put into a folder and given to the child who told the story.

3. Composing group compositions about excursions taken which the teacher wrote down and later read to them.

4. Listening to stories read or told by the teachers.

C. Environmental factors used in relation to activities.

1. Looking at pictures which had titles:

(*a*) Snapshots of children, mounted and labeled by teacher.

(*b*) Mother Goose pictures painted by a parent with verses printed beneath.

2. Listening to messages written in the presence of group to be sent to other children, to parents, to other grades. Looking at mimeographed notices read to children and sent home.

3. Observing notices on pool in playground, as "Close the lid"; "Sun house." Observing a few labels on objects in the room such as, "Library table"; "Kindergarten room" (on door). Observing charts kept for teacher's records, as that giving child's name and the activities he had decided to carry on.

4. Using music books that were illustrated. Children found the page by the picture and often said, "Play this one"—a beginning of make-believe reading.

5. Looking at books, turning pages, recognizing numbers.

6. Enjoying the library room in the school; books, pictures, and signs in this environment led to a curiosity over books that was left to free exploration.

7. Writing in the presence of child who asks, "What are you writing? Read it to me."

8. Looking at primers and reading books of brothers' and sisters' in the primary school. This stimulated a desire for reading.

D. Beginning actual reading with the advanced group in kindergarten.

There were a number of children who tested very high mentally, and who grew very eager to read but were unable to be placed in the first grade because of school limitations. These children were placed in an advanced group and their program enriched. Their great interest in books was given much freedom, and there was daily opportunity to satisfy it, consisting of making up stories about their experiences.

The following are examples of the stories which they developed and learned to read from charts:

OUR FIREHOUSE

Our trip to the firehouse

We went to the firehouse.
The captain slid down a pole.
We saw a fire engine.
The captain rang a bell.
He let us try on his hat.

OH, MR. SUN

By Raymond (song form)

"Oh, Mr. Sun, rises up at morning and swims away at night.
Then Mr. Moon comes along and blows out the light."

## A KINDERGARTEN READING TABLE[5]

In the kindergarten room is a round table on which are kept picture books. At any time, the children are free to go to the table to look at the books.

There are picture books which the children have brought from home, picture books the teachers have made, and scrap books the little folk have made themselves. Some of the books have pictures in them which are definitely connected with children's everyday life, or with the activities of our school. There are reference books for

[5] Report by Miss Mildred Brant, teacher in the kindergarten, Cragmont School, Berkeley. Contributed by Miss Ruby Minor, supervisor of elementary education.

use when building with blocks or drawing, for instance, a boat book, a train book, a house book, a garden book, etc. The children learn early that books aid them in solving problems.

We often talk of the care of books. They must be laid carefully on the table when idle and handled gently when in use. The value of the store books is talked of; also the value of the scrap books, particularly because they can not be replaced if any harm comes to them.

Although these little people can not read, and the pictures are all that they understand, they are learning early in life that it is to the bound pages we go for information; that in books can be found connections with every one of our everyday experiences. They will want to know more of books. They will have an incentive to know what the printed figures say—and will have a desire to read.

Through all the situations described in the above reports, the children were widening their experiences, acquiring facility in the use of ideas, command of simple English sentences, enlarging their speaking vocabularies, increasing in accuracy of enunciation and pronunciation, and becoming interested in learning to read. In other words, they were developing the background which would facilitate sure and rapid progress.

## SUGGESTED ATTAINMENTS IN READING READINESS FOR THE KINDERGARTEN[6]

A full, rich program of varied experiences which meet the children's needs of learning about their environment and relate to their purposes will provide the desired preparation for reading if the teacher learns to sense the close relationship between reading and all that the child does. Actual reading should very rarely, if ever, be attempted in the kindergarten.

The attainments listed below are suggested as those which have seemed to many students of the problem of reading readiness to be both possible and desirable for children ready to leave the kindergarten. They are presented with the reservation that they do not represent all the attainments which ought to result from the kindergarten year. *They relate only to that by-product of its experiences: reading readiness.* To attain this state the teacher ought never to ignore the first and most important end of kindergarten life: furthering the complete growth of each child according to his individual needs.

1. Attitudes; appreciation:

(*a*) Joy in the use of books.

(*b*) A sense of responsibility toward group activities; the spirit of cooperation necessary for group work in primary reading.

[6] These attainments were compiled by the editor from the report of the reading committee of the Curriculum Commission on Reading Objectives; and the study of a large selection of courses of study in reading, among most important of which were those of Long Beach, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Berkeley, San Diego, and Kalamazoo, Mich.

(*c*) Respect for other people's books.

(*d*) Carefulness in handling books.

(*e*) Interest in the worth while experiences offered by exploration of the immediate environment—home, community, school.

(*f*) Enjoyment of humor in stories read to them.

2. Knowledge:

(*a*) A rich fund of meanings related to child interests.

(*b*) Realization of the pleasures and values to be found through reading.

(*c*) Knowledge of several simple stories, some folklore, many child poems and rhymes.

(*d*) Knowledge of how to use books, *i. e.*, how to hold them, how to turn pages, and of how to care for books properly.

3. Abilities:

(*a*) Growth in ability to express meanings or desires in oral sentences.

(*b*) An increase in vocabulary of everyday needs. (This is particularly important with children who do not hear English spoken at home.)

(*c*) Ability to retell a story told or read to group.

(*d*) Ability to sense emotional coloration in stories heard.

(*e*) Ability to open books, hold them correctly, and to avoid damaging them.

(*f*) Growth in accuracy of enunciation and pronunciation, which will insure right habits in the reading experiences to come later.

(*g*) Ability to carry on various activities which will develop reading interests—games, plays, field trips, constructive and creative efforts.

(*h*) Ability to associate meaning with symbols.

## THE JUNIOR PRIMARY GROUP AND READING READINESS.

The fundamental purpose of the junior primary group is the extension and enrichment of the experiences of children of immature mental age or limited experience, and that one of the important results of such a program is better preparation for first-grade activities as they now exist.

Here we merely call attention to the fact that the children of junior primary groups are ready for activities of larger scope than those carried on by kindergarten groups, and that toward the end of the junior primary period simple reading, closely associated with the vital interests of the children, should be undertaken by these groups *if they show readiness.* The program should provide continual opportunities for increasing interest in reading and for recognizing its value; the first plans for real reading should be similar to those we shall presently

discuss as suitable for the early part of the first grade. In the Evidences of Reading Readiness, page 17, the teacher will find listed desirable attainments for junior primary groups, in reading.

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FIRST GRADE TO PREPARATION FOR READING

A great many first-grade teachers will find that the children of their groups differ largely in previous training, experience, and capacity to learn. Kindergartens and junior primary groups are not universally established and even where they are found, their programs are not always of the type that provides sufficient background for reading. Children still come into the first grade in large numbers before they are ready to undertake actual reading, and this condition will no doubt exist for many years.

Often these teachers face the problem of meeting the needs of as many as five different groups of children:

1. Those who speak English, but are immature in mental age and limited in experience. These children usually do not manifest much interest in reading.
2. Those who do not speak English with ease. Usually these lack experience also.
3. Those who are mentally mature and experienced enough to enable them to learn to read.
4. Those who are mentally advanced, but limited in experiences.
5. Those who are both of high mental age and possessed of rich funds of previous experiences. These children usually are already reading when they enter school.

Frequently there are a few children who form a sixth group: Those who are repeating the work of the first grade because they have been deemed "failures"—which usually means they have not learned to read.

Perhaps the best way of successfully meeting the needs of these varying children, in large schools, at any rate, is their classification into groups of like characteristics, with programs designed particularly for their specific needs, and a chance to advance from one group to the next as soon as they are ready. But such classification is not yet possible everywhere. The program of activities centering in group interests is here of peculiar value in that it solves many of the old difficulties of the teacher. It aids her in discovering the background and needs of each child as well as in establishing the necessary feeling of "oneness" among children which is the beginning of group consciousness and cooperative effort. It provides new, interesting experiences, so retaining the interest of the mature children and challenging them to effort. It stimulates the interest and effort of the immature children. It provides a variety of tasks calling for a

variety of abilities. All can take part and achieve success. Both because of the fact that many children of the group are greatly in need of extended experiences before taking up reading, and because all in the group need to become acquainted with one another and learn to work together, the continuation of activities such as those carried on in the kindergarten and junior primary room, *without reading*—except as the few "ready" children themselves naturally use this—is essential in the early period of the first grade. The children should enter wholeheartedly upon some simple group enterprise which challenges them to discuss freely, to make plans together, to solve many problems, to gather information through asking questions, taking trips, looking at pictures. They should carry out plans and judge results of their work together.

Since, however, children vary largely in previous experiences they will also vary in the degree of readiness and desire for reading. The teacher will find in her group, usually, those who are very eager at the first to learn to read. It is essential that this eagerness be kept alive even though these children are not completely ready in other ways for the difficult task ahead. They must be satisfied by opportunities to attempt simple reading while at the same time they must be provided with enriching experiences to foster success in their efforts. The few children who already read must not be neglected. The teacher provides for the satisfaction and increasing effort of these children by gradually building reading into all that the whole class does, and allowing these partly or wholly ready children to take the initiative in the first reading of the group. The provision, meanwhile, of books or mimeographed material relating to the activities in which the children are engaged—for the use of those children who are reading already—is essential.

# Chapter II

## The Evidences of Reading Readiness

How may the teacher know when children of her group are ready to take up reading in earnest? Studies of this difficult problem are still being made, but there is now general agreement on many factors that seem to make up a state of readiness for reading. These are listed below. There are no unfailing tests by which teachers may make sure that these factors are present in their own groups. They must rely upon a careful, constant, alert observation of children's attitudes, and a thorough study of their abilities. It will help teachers if they will develop two lists, the first a list of those factors involved in the class activities which may lead to readiness, and a second list of the tendencies toward readiness which may be discovered from time to time in each of her children. She may then constantly check her guidance of group activities by reference to the first list, to see whether or not she is availing herself of all the opportunities offered for the development of reading readiness. By reference to the second list she may keep a constant watch upon the children's individual progress toward the desired state.

The following factors [1] are usually deemed significant indications of readiness in children:

1. Many correct concepts of common things, gained through wide and varied experiences.
2. Good physical condition.
3. Mental age of 6 or above.
4. Strong interest in reading and desire to read.
5. Evidence of clear thinking, use of judgment, gained through practice in solving many simple problems related to their experiences.
6. Recognition of reading situations:

(*a*) Curiosity as to signs, advertisements, labels in and out of school, and at home.

(*b*) Looking at picture books with interest; curiosity as to names and stories.

(*c*) Bringing books to school to be read and shown.

(*d*) Association of word with action, with object, with picture, with music. Association of certain rhymes, stories, or words with pictures or places in books.

7. Ability to make proper eye movement.

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[1] This list has been compiled from the following sources:

(1) A Suggestive Curriculum of Activities for the Transition Groups. Bull. No. 7, Los Angeles city school district, department of kindergarten-primary education. M. Madilene Veverka, director.

(2) Anderson, C. J., and Davidson, Isobel. Reading Objectives. Laurel Book Co., 1925, pp. 34, 35.

8. Some ability to recognize and distinguish form.

9. Ability to discriminate between similar sounds.

10. Ability to cooperate with group, to show courtesy, and to carry responsibility.

11. Ability to express and communicate ideas orally; possession of good speaking vocabulary.

12. Ability to comprehend oral expressions and communications from others.

13. Ability to listen attentively while rhymes and stories are told; to comprehend what is read.

14. Ability to follow line of thought.

15. Ability to repeat rhymes or brief messages correctly.

16. Ability to follow directions.

17. Ability to recall experiences.

18. Ability to anticipate what comes next in a story.

19. Ability to supply missing words or part in familiar rhymes or stories.

20. Ability to reproduce very short stories or parts of stories. Desire to tell stories.

21. Ability and desire to dramatize simple stories; to act out their meanings.

22. Ability to classify pictures or other objects in making booklets or carrying on other concrete activities.

23. Ability to recognize own name; to tell meaning of common signs, names of streets, notices, such as "Danger," "Cars stop here," etc.

The wise teacher will wait for the appearance of all these factors in a child before she attempts very much definite teaching of reading. She will not hurry any of her children, "or impose meaningless things upon them. By deferring books, for a time, she is building a strength and an attitude which will enable them to get more from their reading when they take it up" [2]—and to get it far more readily and happily.

[1] Bull. No. 7, Los Angeles city school district, cited above.

# Chapter III

## How the Teacher Builds a Reading Program About Children's Activities and Contributing Enterprises

As children participate in activities of finding out about things, in discussion, in doing, they have many questions which need answering, and begin to realize their need for information. In addition, valid reasons for records of their experiences arise naturally. The teacher will need to see these reasons before the children do and be ready for them. Sometimes she can wisely suggest them, exercising care not to do so until the children's need is evident. She begins by bringing in materials, or helping children plan enterprises which will provide answers to their questions. The earliest materials will be pictures or objects which supply accurate information related to the questions concerned. Trips to find out should be undertaken whenever feasible. Children should be encouraged to ask their questions of other people, to look for pictures and objects themselves.

Meanwhile, the teacher seizes every opportunity to reveal the contribution to their needs that reading can make. She provides environmental devices such as these:

1. Informational pictures related to children's discussions and questions, bearing simple sentences of description.
2. Pictures that give pleasure, related to children's interests, with descriptive sentences printed beneath them. These are all placed within easy access of children without much comment until noticed.
3. A reading center, containing several attractive picture books, and simple supplementary reading materials, with perhaps a child's magazine. This is such an important part of "setting the stage" for reading that it is separately discussed on page 42.
4. Signs (of more than one word, preferably) and labels, sparingly used, on articles of furniture much in use. Children's names on their lockers, chairs, over their hooks in the cloakroom, names of materials on the doors of supply closets or lockers, impress on children one important need for reading.
5. An interesting bulletin board, hung low enough to permit children to observe it. This may be developed into a real means of keeping children's interest in class activities vivid and later, a means of organizing reading materials.

Pictures relating to group interests may be frequently posted. Later these may be pasted on large sheets of oak tag, with simple sentences to be read, first by the teacher and later by children as first-reading materials. Plans for the day's work, names of class

committee members, news of vacation activities of children, descriptions of individual or group experiences, school news, pictures from papers and magazines relating to current events, may be planned so as to be within the child's interests and abilities and posted as a regular procedure. Children soon learn to look at the bulletins and to wish to read them.

The teacher must plan these bulletins herself, exercising care to use in them a vocabulary growing out of the children's interests and needed by them in the near future, with repetitions of difficult words. Such bulletins are especially stimulating when they summarize or otherwise relate to the activity of chief interest at the time.

The first reading material may well be a sentence describing the picture drawn or pasted on one of these bulletins. The sentence should relate to some part of the beginning activities of the children in which they are all intensely interested, and should be followed on later days by other single sentences, or small groups of sentences relating to the same activities or to schoolroom happenings. Provision should be made in these for repetition of the first words attempted, and for continuous repetition of new words or word groups as they are being learned.

The development of such a program with a group of first grade children who gave evidence of being ready for reading is described in detail by a teacher who has used it successfully.

## BEGINNING READING BASED ON CHILDREN'S INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES[1]

A part of the general procedure agreed upon by the teachers and the director of elementary education for the approach to beginning reading is to have the children choose from their interests and activities the stories which make up their preprimer work.

A very wide list of possible subject matter for the first lessons in reading and a core vocabulary compiled from 10 or 12 primers has been supplied each teacher. This list has been compiled from actual classroom experiences and reflects a wide range of child interests. It is used *to guide but not to dominate* the work of the preprimer period.

After the group of children concerned have been guided to create their stories, these are printed in large type to form the content of the first lessons in reading. Later, these stories are reprinted or typewritten for their own first books to be taken home as a surprise for their parents.

I use this approach to reading because I am convinced after three years of experience with this method and from my reading on the subject, that it is the most natural approach. The importance of a good beginning in reading can not be overestimated.

[1] This report was written by Miss Jeanette Brown, teacher in the first grade, Pasadena. Contributed by Miss Nancy Gertrude Milligan, director of elementary education.

The aims toward which to work during the preprimer period are these:

1. To develop a desire to learn to read.
2. To use material within the child's experience and interest.
3. To build associations back of the printed symbols as the child is acquiring a vocabulary.
4. To secure correct enunciation and pronunciation.
5. To insist on good habits in reading from the first.
6. To encourage the children to express themselves easily and to use good English.
7. To give the pupils as rich and pleasurable experiences as possible so that they will develop the right attitude toward reading.

After the necessary details of enrollment and organization have been attended to, the children come together in a friendly group on the rug. We talk together about what we are going to do. I explain that grown folk always plan what they are to do before attempting it, and ask the children if they wish to do this. Immediately they are full of interest. Discussion of what they wish to do follows, and I ask them if I shall write down their plans on the board. Usually they give an enthusiastic assent. The following is a typical example of such planning:

We want to read.
We want to write.
We want to draw pictures.
We want to make a doll house.
We want to sing new songs.
We want to weave.

Children will offer many more plans than can be placed on one chart. The teacher may help them select those they consider most important for their first work, reserving other plans for a later time. The first plans may then be printed on a large sheet of tag board with large type.

As soon as our first chart is printed we are ready for our first reading lesson. This is a very important event. It needs to be planned and carried on with great care. The procedure I have found successful is this: I read the chart through for the children first, using a large phrase marker which is placed under each sentence so that they see the sentence as a whole. Then I ask if some one wishes to find the place where it says "We want to make a doll house," etc. This is continued until they are somewhat familiar with the sentences and try to avoid a procedure that will result in their memorizing the sentences by the order. Thought getting should be insisted upon from the first, and can be aided by the use of questions to which the children will read the answers from the chart. Later phrase and word flash cards may be introduced. These may be conveniently kept in a pocket at the bottom of the charts to which they belong. Children

enjoy using these in matching games when they are able to read more readily, and still later, races and different kinds of drills may be devised with them so that the phrases and words become a part of the children's vocabulary. We usually have additional drill on words presenting difficulties, which we call "Our hard words."

When the children are familiar with the chart "Our plan," they build other stories. Activities are meanwhile developing, and when the teacher centers the chart materials about the chief interests of the children and the activities in progress, reading is inherent in a large part of the day's program. I let the children do their own planning, guiding them at times when they need help. I try to stimulate their reading interests and direct them toward certain goals. For instance, I try to interest them in making stories for the charts which center in home life when they are carrying on activities relating to this interest during their activity periods; or stories which relate to classroom events of importance to them.

The following is a typical lesson chosen in this way:

OUR MOTHER

Mother is at home.
She keeps the house clean.
She cooks for us.
She washes and irons for us.
She sews for us.
We like to help mother.
We love our mother.

The following are phrases and words which I printed for them to use with this chart:

Our mother, for us, the house, we love, we like, she sews, she cooks, washes and irons, she, home, house, mother, we, to help mother, is at home.

Some of the drills used were:

1. Question game:

Who can find the sentence that tells where mother is? Who can find the sentence that tells what you like to do for mother? Who can find the sentence that tells how mother keeps the house?

2. Puzzle game:

One child takes the phrase marker. I ask him to find different sentences, not in order. I either ask questions as in question game, or read the sentence I want him to find.

This game is also played through finding phrases and words:

Who can find the word that tells whom you love? Who can find the phrase that tells where mother is?

3. Yes and No game:

I make statements about the content of the lesson. If it is true, they say "yes." If not in the story, they say "no."

Many different games can be devised to stimulate interest. Titles of other stories they have developed are: Our Baby, Father, Our Pets, Our Dolls, What We Are Making, Rules for Activity Period.

WHAT WE ARE MAKING

Donald is making a lamp.
Four of the boys are making chairs.
Howard is making a table.
Robert is making a davenport.
Two of the girls are making dolls.
The girls are sewing for the dolls.
Dickie is making a sideboard.

Special experiences such as excursions, walks, parties, pets coming to school also furnish valuable materials for chart stories. The following titles suggest examples of these stories: Our Walk, Little Pinkie, A White Dog, Virginia's Cat, Our Flower Sale, Halloween, Our Hallóween Party, Thanksgiving.

LITTLE PINKIE

Dorothy brought Pinkie to school.
Pinkie is a white rabbit.
He has pink ears and pink eyes.
We sat on the rug.
We put Pinkie in the middle of the rug.
He hopped around.
He washed his face.
He scratched his ear.
He ate some lettuce.
We like Pinkie.

News of interest to the group is also printed on charts for the bulletin board, as in the following typical announcement:

This is April 8, 1929.
Spring is here.
Watch for the spring flowers.
(A picture of birds building their nests is placed here.)
The birds are building their nest.
They are very happy.

The children usually illustrate their charts. Sometimes we use a picture. I check the words against the core vocabulary list.

There are definite periods set aside for reading. In addition, because the bulletin board, good health talks, excursions, and other class enterprises create an increasing need for it, reading runs like a red thread through all the day's activity. When the children become familiar with the charts and know the words and phrases reasonably well, they often choose to read to each other in their time for self-directed work. They have to be taught to work quietly so as not to disturb the reading class being guided by the teacher.

After about two and a half months of preprimer work, a stencil is cut for each chart on our great primer typewriter and copies run off on the mimeograph for each child. Each story is illustrated by the children and pasted in books made of gray bogus paper, 9 by 12 inches in size. "My first book" and the child's name are printed on the cover. On the first page appears a real dedication:

Dedicated to our dear mothers
Published by
Miss ........'s girls and boys
---------- school, ----, 1929.

There is also a table of contents, and at the back of the book a page for "Our read quickly game," composed of phrases, a page for "Our words" and a page for "Our hard words." There are from 12 to 16 stories in the book. The attempt is made to keep all these stories short, simple, and well spaced.

The children bind the books. Each child takes his book home as soon as he can read the stories well and knows the phrases and words at the back of the book. When the first books go home it always serves as a stimulus for those who learn slowly to work hard so that they may take home their books also. I have never had little children happier than they are when they take home their first books.

Such a plan for approaching reading provides its own safeguards. It keeps each child interested and working, provides variety in drills, and meets the differing individual needs. For example, some children learn to read much more slowly than others. The method just described is more effective with them than the method which requires them to begin at once with a book, for it allows them to proceed at their own rates, and provides a constant, natural stimulus to work at their best levels of effort. The teacher is able to give them special help, and those children who learn quickly also assist the slower ones by "playing school" with them.

The children's planning results in a balancing of different types of reading activities. The stories children build will supply the vocabulary needed for taking up primers as well as for carrying on their activities. I am convinced of this after using this approach to reading with four classes.

## OUTCOMES

This experience has shown me, too, that such a method results in the following desirable outcomes:

A. Growth in children:

A favorable attitude toward reading.

A desire to read.

An eagerness for their next reading experiences in primers.

The acquiring of a sight vocabulary sufficient to enable them to carry on their activities and to read easily from their primers.

The establishment of correct habits in reading, such as—

1. Thought getting.
2. Proper eye sweep.
3. Proper use of phrase marker.
4. Clear enunciation and pronunciation.
5. Good expression so that others may enjoy the oral reading.

B. Teacher growth:

Power to evaluate and guide the interests of children.

Skill in directing lessons.

Habit of reading good books on the subject of beginning reading.

A deepening conviction of the importance of beginning reading.

C. Further activity:

When we finish "My first book," the children are ready and eager to begin their first primers. Our supply of reading material is being constantly enriched. The teachers are free to choose the order in which the books are read, but are carefully guided in the basic principles for selection. Both group and individual reading is used. The number of books read by the group varies from approximately 12 to 25 during a year. The individual reading from attractive books on "our library table" varies greatly according to the individual differences in the children. The director of elementary education advises the organization of classes which permits a teacher to have one group of children for the entire year. This is followed in the majority of cases and helps to create a situation more favorable to the building of the attitudes, habits, and skills most desirable at this age level.

## Points of Emphasis

Because the first simple reading materials used in this class were suggested by the children themselves, and because they felt early the desire to record and recall their new experiences, they saw the close connection existing between the spoken words with which they were familiar, and the new printed symbols. They saw that these symbols had meaning. They were familiar with the ideas involved both because of experience and because of expressing them in conversation. They were stimulated to greater efforts to learn the symbols. A higher degree of interest in reading was the natural result.

All the earliest materials and much of the later reading matter should be closely associated with the actual experiences the children are having. Only so will it have any significance or value to them.

A few other examples of such a program follow. They have been adapted from reports of class work in California schools.

## HOW READING CONTRIBUTED TO EXPERIENCES IN THE NATURAL WORLD AND LOCAL COMMUNITY LIFE

### I

One approach to beginning reading in a low first grade of a school for oriental children was through a garden experience.[2] The parents of many of the children were gardeners, and the latter were somewhat familiar with problems and processes of gardening.

Mieko, who lived on a ranch, brought some corn to school one day. It was put into a cup of water, soaked, and then planted by the children. This led to a growing interest in other seeds. The children brought seeds of carrots, poppies, lettuce, and pumpkins. They were planted and cared for by the children, and while this was going on, a story book about "Our garden" was built up by the group. The stories were first printed on large charts on the bulletin board. These charts, illustrated, later formed the book. The interest in reading was greatly stimulated, and a more determined effort made by the children to learn new words and to read sentences. That the experience was also productive of the pleasures of reading is evident in the accompanying picture.

The story book made by first-grade gardeners. Monroe School, Stockton

### II

In other groups,[3] one of the first lessons in reading was given at the suggestion of the children in the room. After discussing and finding out what they would do in the first grade, they wanted to make a chart of those activities. This was recorded on a chart as follows:

This is our room.
It is the first grade room.
We shall learn to read.
We shall learn to write.
We shall learn to paint.
We shall learn to draw.

Later experiences were recorded on a weekly chart, copied for the children and collected into a book which was a record of their whole year's work.

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[2] Report written by Miss Ethelind M. Bonney, teacher of the low first grade, Monroe School, Stockton. Contributed by Miss Myrtle Carnes, supervisor.

[3] From a report by Mrs. Cleone Brown, teacher in the low and high first grades, Thousand Oaks School, Berkeley. Contributed by Miss Ruby Minor, supervisor of elementary education.

One of these experiences was a trip through the school grove and around the lot by the school. The class collected leaves from trees and wild flowers, and talked about the beauty and usefulness of trees. Next the children started to collect wild flowers, and made wild flower books. When they brought the flowers, the teacher wrote the names on the board for them to try to write. Then she put the names in a book as a list. They copied the names of the flowers that they brought and included them in their books. The high first group wrote theirs, and the teacher printed the names for the low first group.

The following bulletins were made, and represented the type of reading done:

1

We went to the grove.
We saw oak trees.
We saw bay trees.
The trees give us shade.
The birds like the trees.

2

We made a book.
We have leaves in our book.
We have oak leaves.
We have bay leaves.
We have pictures in our book.

The excursion created an interest in trees as well as in wild flowers. After talking about trees, singing songs, reading poems, etc., the children had an informal tree planting on Arbor Day. They planted a "flowering peach" tree. The kindergarten was invited to be with them at the planting. When it began to rain the kindergarten sang a song about "rain." Then all were invited into the kindergarten room where the teacher gave an interesting story about the "peach tree" that is found on a plate. She used the plate in telling this story. Reading and language activities, art, and music all contributed to these interests. They culminated in the making of "tree booklets," interest in reading increased, efforts to learn were greater; these were rewarded by increasing skill.

## III

## A Stenographic Report of a Nature Study Experience in a Low First Grade [4]

The following report shows how one teacher extended the experiences of her group in the natural world, relating to these new experi-

[4] Activity carried on under the direction of Miss Alice Adams, first-grade teacher, demonstration school, State Teachers College, San Jose. Report contributed by Miss Mabel G. Crumby, assistant professor of education and teacher training, San Jose State Teachers College.

ences the expression of ideas in conversation, and revealing to the children the value of reading. It explains one method of building materials from children's enterprises, and of directing their attention to reading as a thought-getting process

T. We have had so much fun watching the starfish that was brought us that I thought perhaps we might like to talk about it. You may tell what you know, and I may be able to-tell you some things that you don't know. (The teacher lifted the starfish out of the bowl and held it in her hand.)

T. What do you know about the starfish, Norene?

N. It's—it's—is he dead?

T. No, he is not dead. Did you ever see a starfish before?

Ch. Sure, my father saw three of them in the ocean.

Ch. I have seen them orange colored.

T. Yes, there are different colored starfish. Where have you seen them?

Ch. Down at Carmel in the ocean.

T. Yes. Where have you seen them, Marion?

Ch. Down at Santa Cruz. I saw two down at Santa Cruz last Sunday. We tried to get one, but it went out into the ocean too far.

T. This starfish came from Santa Cruz. Why do you suppose it is called a starfish?

Ch. Because it is like a star.

Ch. I'd put it back in the bowl.

T. Yes, I shall in a few minutes. Do you know how it walks?

Ch. No.

T. It moves very slowly, using all those little feet (pointing to the feet of the starfish). These tiny feet cling to the rocks and pull the starfish along. Do you know what these points in the star are called?

Chn. No.

T. They are called arms. How many arms have you?

Chn. Two.

T. And he has how many?

Chn. (counting). One-two-three-four-five. Five arms.

Chn. Where are his eyes?

T. You can't see them very well, but he has an eye on the end of each arm. (Teacher shows where the eyes are located.)

Ch. We could see them better with a magnifying glass.

T. Perhaps I may be able to borrow one for you. What kind of water does he live in?

Ch. Salt water.

T. What did we have to do to this water so that he could live?

Chn. Put salt in it.

Ch. The ocean isn't salt.

Another

Ch. Sure it is. I put my finger in the water at Santa Cruz; then I put my finger in my mouth, and it tasted salty.

T. Those arms look very stiff to us, but he can move them.

Ch. What is that little hole in the middle?

T. That is the opening through which the starfish gets water.

T. Where do you suppose his mouth is? (Shows children where it is located.) After I tell you how he eats, you will see how convenient it is to have his mouth there. Now, let me tell you what he eats. He is very fond of oysters. Oysters live in shells. Have you ever seen an oyster in the shell?

Ch. Yes, my daddy caught one.

T. How many shells has an oyster?

Chn. Two.

T. (Holding up clam shell.) This is a clam shell, but it is very much like an oyster shell only larger. The starfish likes oysters and clams. When he is hungry he goes over to an oyster or a clam and, bending those arms around it, he begins to pull and pull, trying to open the shell. The oyster or clam which is inside the shell tries to hold it shut. But the starfish pulls so hard that the shell opens. Then the starfish eats the oyster or clam. I will tell you something else that the starfish likes that you might be able to get for him. It is something that is in your garden and lives in a little round shell. It moves very slowly.

Ch. A snail.

Ch. I have a whole box of them.

Ch. I will bring some.

Ch. How shall I bring them? With my hands?

T. Put them in a box. It will be fine to bring the starfish some snails and then we can watch him eat them.

T. We have been so interested in the starfish that I thought perhaps you would like to write a story about the starfish. Then we can print it for you and you may take it to mother. Would you like to do that?

Chn. Yes.

T. What shall we have for the title?

Chn. Our Starfish.

(Teacher writes at dictation of children.)

Ch. We have a starfish.

Ch. It lives in a bowl of salt water.

T. Where did we get it?

Ch. At the beach.

T. Now tell me what to write about where we found it.

Ch. Mrs. Binkley found it in the ocean.

T. What else do you want to tell mother about it?

Ch. It has five arms.

T. Do you want to tell mother what it has on the end of each arm?
Ch. It has an eye on the end of each arm.
T. Shall we read our story now?
(Children read in concert the story which the teacher has written on the board at their dictation, which is as follows:)

OUR STARFISH

We have a starfish.
It lives in a bowl of salt water.
Mrs. Binkley found it in the ocean.
It has five arms.
It has an eye on the end of each arm.

Rebecca then read the story aloud, followed by Florence Ann, and Robert in turn. Others wanted to read, but there was not enough time, so the teacher promised that the story would be printed for them to read and take home the next day.

## IV

## THE MARKET[5]

A visit to market, and activities growing out of it are here described in the words of the children who had the experience. Their stories were dictated to the teacher and copied in large type for each child. Then the children pasted these copies into books they were making for themselves. These books were entitled "The Market," and served as reading material for some time. On the pages opposite the stories each child illustrated the latter according to his own ideas.

1. TRIP TO MARKET.

We went to the market.
We rode in a big bus.
We each brought 10 cents for the fare.
Miss Manlove, Mrs. Chenot, and Miss Rogers went with us.
There were many children in the bus.
The girls sat down, but some of the boys stood up.
We passed trees, houses, people, and stores.
We did not stop until we got to the market.
We got out at the library.

2. FRIENDS WHO HELPED US.

Mr. DuRee and a policeman helped us off the bus.
We each had a partner and got in line.

[5] This activity was carried on with the guidance of Miss Claire Rogers, teacher in the first grade of the Roosevelt Demonstration School, Long Beach. The report was contributed by Miss Elga M. Shearer, director of elementary education.

Mr. DuRee walked at the front of the line, and the policeman at the back.

Mr. DuRee asked the people to step back so we could be near the stands.

We walked all around the market.

We tried not to touch anything.

The people looked at us and said, "What fine children."

3. What We Saw.

We saw turnips, spinach, tomatoes, carrots, radishes, and all kinds of vegetables.

We saw oranges, apples, bananas, grapefruit, and lemons.

We saw chickens and rabbits ready to cook.

We saw many other good things to eat.

We saw some made flowers and some that grow.

There was a peanut-butter machine with a funny horse kicking.

4. The Trip Home.

At the end of the market the bus man was waiting for us.

Then we had a surprise.

Mr. DuRee gave each one an orange.

We said, "Thank you."

Then we got in the bus, one at a time.

We tried not to push.

Then we started back to school.

We said good-bye to the friends who helped us.

We all had a good time at the market.

5. Our Plans.

The next day we planned to make the market in our room.

We said we would make five stands for vegetables, fruit, and flowers.

We marked the places on the floor, for the stands.

We decided to make awnings.

We talked about how to make some trays to hold the fruit and vegetables.

Then we were ready to work.

6. Making the Stands.

We took four poles and four laths for the frame of each stand.

The two front poles were higher than the two back ones.

We nailed blocks under each one to make it stand up.

We put laths across from pole to pole.

For each stand we made a counter of two apple boxes and a wide board.

7. MAKING THE AWNINGS.

We had samples of real awning.
We chose the ones we liked best.
Then we made some of paper.
We cut scallops to make them pretty.
Each stand has a different awning.
We put awning across the front and the sides.
We covered the top of each stand with paper.

8. MAKING VEGETABLES AND FRUIT.

We had real vegetables and fruit to look at.
We made ours of clay.
We smoothed out all the cracks.
We saved the best ones.
When they were dry, we painted them.

9. MAKING THE TRAYS.

We made trays of cheese boxes.
We put handles on each one.
We painted them gray.
We decorated each one with a different color.
We put our vegetables and fruit in the trays.

10. OUR FLOWERS.

The girls made some flowers of paper.
The boys painted some cans green.
The girls put the flowers in them.
We brought some flowers from home.
They all looked pretty in the green cans.

11. THE VEGETABLE TRUCK.

Charles and some of the boys made a vegetable truck.
It has a motor, a steering wheel, a tool box, a battery, a window, a top, a door, and a seat.
A boy or girl can ride in it.
Now we can carry vegetables to the market.

12. HOW WE PLAY IN OUR MARKET.

We have a boy or girl in each stand to sell things.
The other boys and girls buy things with toy money.
Sometimes we say, "How much do these vegetables cost?"
We carry our vegetables in the shopping bags we made.
We take the vegetables to the doll house.
The girls cook them on the little stove.
When the vegetables are ready we have a tea party.

A LETTER

DEAR MR. DUREE:

We made a market in our room. We have five stands. We have vegetables, fruit, and flowers. Please come and see our market. We think that you will like it. Bring the policeman with you. Our room is No. 5.

Your little friends,

FIRST GRADE BOYS AND GIRLS,
*Roosevelt School.*

Mr. DuRee came to school.
What do you think he brought?
He gave each girl a fan.
He gave each boy a bell.

## SOCIAL EXPERIENCES FOSTER ABILITY TO READ COMPREHENDINGLY

1. *Abundant dramatic play:*

Spontaneous play with the trucks, trains, grocery store, or playhouse children have made in their rooms serves to organize the new information they are acquiring through group activities, so building knowledge on which to base later reading matter. Such play supplies vicarious experiences. It leads to expression in dramatization, and so strengthens abilities to think about the meaning of what is read, to comprehend ideas expressed orally, and to speak with ease and fluency.

2. *Social grouping of children:*

The child's enjoyment of reading, and his sense of its value is increased when it is shared in natural social situations. "Gathered about a table, an open grate, in a circle around the teacher, or in an informal fashion upon the floor, children are encouraged to talk and read with delight. The social influence of small groups should be utilized both in the class work and the independent work-study periods." [6] Children are thus stimulated to greater efforts than when working alone, or when seated in stiff, formal rows. Opportunities are also provided for the development of good social habits. Reading is fundamentally a social exercise, and can function as an exchange of experiences when carried on in a natural social situation.

The need for sectioning children according to their abilities will soon become evident to the teacher as she studies each individual. The value of the social influence inherent in the small groups she will form should be capitalized to its full extent.

## HELPING CHILDREN INCREASE IN SIGHT VOCABULARY

Children learn to read by learning to recognize the printed or written symbols that express the spoken words they already know. There must be constant provision in the program for strengthening the interest of the child in learning to know these symbols; otherwise the effort to associate written and spoken words will not seem worth while.

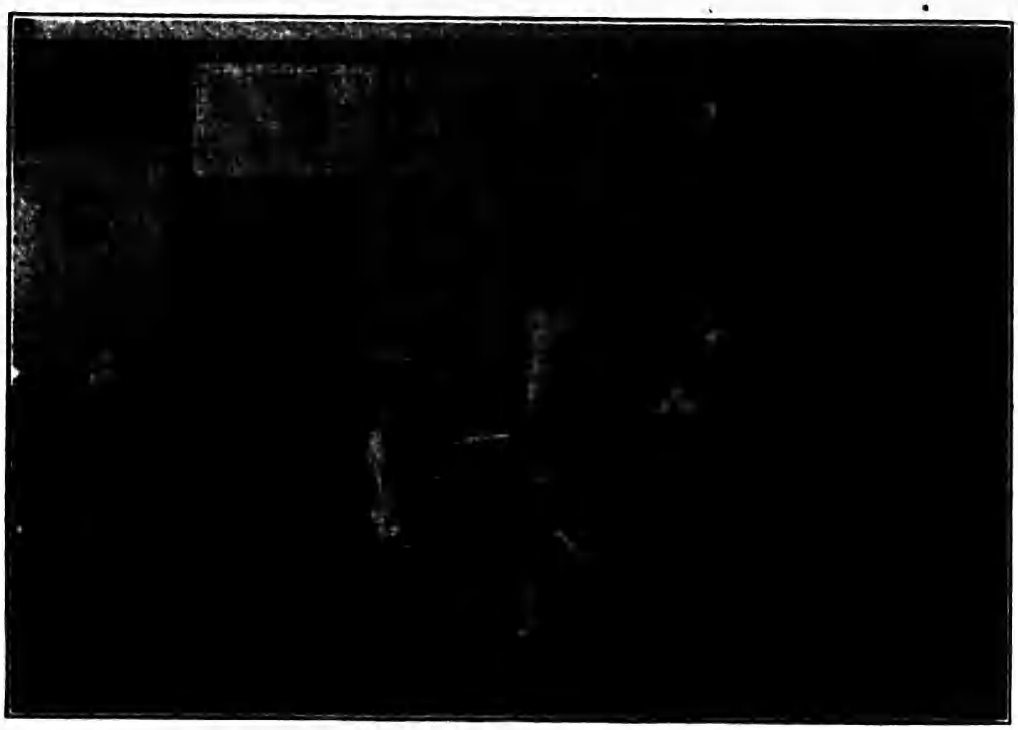
[6] Anderson, C. J., and Davidson, Isobel. Reading Objectives. Laurel Book Co., 1925, p. 39.

In addition, much repetition of the words being learned must be provided; the child does not fix them in his mind in a single trial.

Careful and scientific guidance is needed to insure an adequate, well-rounded growth of vocabulary. The teacher must first insure that appropriate words are associated with a large number of meanings which the children wish to acquire; second, she must help the child develop accuracy, and later, speed, in word recognition.

The Report of the National Committee on Reading[7] suggests the following conditions as essential to growth of the vocabulary during this preliminary period:

1. Wide extension of experience, with care that new words are learned which fit these experiences.



Capitalizing the social influence of the small group. Commodore Stockton School, San Francisco

2. Opportunity for repetition of new words in connection with additional interesting experiences.

3. Special care to use early the vocabulary of the primer in connection with discussions of pictures, games, and other activities.

4. Observations by teacher to determine vague expressions for which definite vocabulary should be substituted.

5. Elimination of difficulties as children attempt to use new words.

To these we add:

6. Development of an interest in words as a basis for discrimination in word values.

How does the activity program supply these needed conditions? Let us consider each of them in relation to this question:

[7] Twenty-fourth Yearbook, Part I, of the National Society for the Study of Education. Public School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Ill., p. 91.

1. *Wide extension of experience with care that new words are learned which fit these experiences.*

The use of reading matter made by the children themselves about the activity they have chosen as a group, or individual enterprises which are contributing to the group activity, provides for the association of new words with present experiences. In providing for practice needed to learn these words, the teacher will act as a guide. She will plan new bulletins, blackboard stories, environmental materials *so that words most needed by children to express their ideas, words they will constantly meet in carrying on their activity will receive continual definite emphasis and attention.* They will thus build up the vocabulary they need.

Attention should be paid to words which greatly influence the meaning of what is being read. This is done not by taking these words out of their context and listing them for separate study, but by further discussion of the meaning of the whole selection, by concrete illustration of their meaning related to the children's activity. Such devices as children's illustrating or dramatizing sentences, and later stories, which the children have made are also helpful here. *Undue emphasis should not be given at this time to those words which are peculiar to a given activity, probably unusual, and not especially important in clarifying meanings.*

The selection of first materials for supplementary reading, whether in books or in mimeographed materials made by teachers to relate to specific activities, should be guided by the children's immediate needs, in reference to the enterprises they are at that time carrying on.

2. *Opportunity for repetition of new words in connection with additional interesting experiences.*

"The frequent recurrence of concrete situations involving the use of given words or groups of words is the most valuable basis for repetition.[8] This has been touched upon in the previous discussion of the teacher's preparation of practice materials. In addition such devices as the following provide for repetition of words being learned in relation to new situations where these words function:

(*a*) The use of these words in new stories on the blackboard or bulletin board, relating definitely to new steps in the classroom activities.

(*b*) The use of these words or word groups in interesting reading games during the reading hour. The development of practice materials using the words for the children's periods of self-directed work. (See p. 22 for concrete suggestions.)

An example of the use of this device is given in the following report:[9]

[8] Twenty-fourth Yearbook, Pt. I, p. 80.

[9] From a report by Mrs. Lillian Hitchings, teacher of the low first grade, Hawthorne School, Berkeley. Contributed by Miss Ruby Minor, supervisor of elementary education.

## The Hazelnut Bush

The children of one first-grade group watched a hazelnut bush unfold after the tassels had fallen off. With the teacher, they planned a description of their experience, which the teacher wrote on the board. It was as follows:

THE HAZELNUT

See this hazelnut plant.
Now there are little tassels on it.
Next fall there will be hazelnuts on it.
Do you like hazelnuts?
They are small and round.
They are very good to eat.

Matching words: A reading game. First grade, Alamo School, San Francisco

Next day, this same description appeared on a large chart, printed with the large-sized chart printer. In addition each sentence was printed on a separate slip for matching against the chart.

Later when the children had had sufficient experience with words for such activity, the teacher made a silent reading game for the group, which they greatly enjoyed. (The children underlined the correct answer.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| The hazelnut is good to eat | Yes. | No. |
| The hazelnut is big | Yes. | No. |
| Now there are little tassels on the plant | Yes. | No. |
| Now there are nuts on the plant | Yes. | No. |
| The hazelnut is round | Yes. | No. |

(*c*) The making of scrapbooks of pictures illustrating progress of the children's activities, or answers to their questions, with these words used beneath the appropriate pictures.

(*d*) The dramatization of those words which lend themselves to it and which call for peculiar emphasis.

(*e*) Calling attention to the use of these words in the community and in situations other than those with which the children are dealing.

(*f*) Memorization by children of rhymes or little stories which use the words in description of situations with which the children are familiar. Calling attention of the children to their "old friends" in this new use.

(*g*) Use by the teacher in her conversation of the new words.

(*h*) Giving children opportunities to recall meanings of these words.

3. *Special care to use early the vocabulary of the primer in connection with discussions of pictures, games, and other activities.*

If the activities in which first-grade children engage are truly their own, it will usually be found, by the time they are ready to take up a primer, that they have already learned the vocabulary of the primer in association with the real experiences for which this vocabulary stands. Such activities as have been carried on by first-grade children of California, revealed by their teachers' reports, some of which have been included in this book, would most certainly call for the use and repetition of the vocabulary of the new State Series Primer, as well as for the use of many more needed words. If the teacher finds words in the selected primer for which the children are not prepared, it will usually be possible for her to familiarize her group with these words through their use in close association with the children's enterprises. This should not be done unless there is evidence that these words are really useful to the group. Good primers are built with reference to children's needs and interests, and all books should be closely examined before being selected. Neither activities nor primer should be chosen in order to furnish means of teaching certain words to children.

The use of a recommended word list, such as Gates' Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades,[10] which we believe to be the most helpful to teachers, will offer useful guidance in checking the vocabulary of any primer under consideration. It is generally found that vocabularies of children who have carried on a rich program of purposeful activities approximate that of such recommended word lists. This is what we would expect, since these lists have been formed through a study of words needed and widely used by children. Teachers should never rely wholly on the suggested word list, however. They should be familiar with it and use it when it is of help;

[10] Gates, Arthur I. Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades. Bureau of publications, Teachers College, 525 West One hundred and twentieth Street, New York.

but their best guidance will come from a study of their children's interests, and the needs for words that arise through the classroom enterprises.

4. *Observation by the teacher to determine vague expressions for which definite vocabulary should be substituted.*

It will be found that children will attempt to use "vague expressions" in their discussions, particularly of processes involved in constructing and planning their activities. Through thought-provoking questions, used *always* in close relation to the concrete situations involved, the teacher can gradually build up in the group a respect for the habit of finding out just what words mean. The best means of substituting definite, accurate vocabulary are explanations of or trips to see objects and processes described by the words and expressions which children are using vaguely. These means can well be supplemented by pictures, dramatization, and repetitions in meaningful situations.

5. *The elimination of difficulties as children attempt to use new words.*

The teacher can help children learn to be accurate in recognizing words by directing their attention to the most obvious similarities and differences in the form and sound of the new words they are acquiring. The imaginative teacher who remarked, while writing the words "a green box" on the board, "All the people in the second word are very short," and who then asked if the last word had in it any tall people, had in mind this attention to form. In such direction, *care must continually be taken to develop a habit of perceiving the word as a whole*, and, in case of failure then to recognize it, *of seeking known parts of the word as an aid in recognizing it.*

Encouraging the use of context as an aid in recognition of words also helps. Children should be encouraged to appraise the thought of the selection being read, and to think out unfamiliar words they meet. This places comprehension foremost. Care in selecting material within the ability range of the child will do much to prevent the habits of carelessness which might result from such a procedure. The value of using sentences directly associated with the activities in which children are engaged is evident here.

Drilling on words in groups and phrases is valuable in eliminating difficulties in first attempts. It helps children to grasp words as parts of phrases. The ability to read word groups is increased by helping children to note some familiar characteristic, as the known words in the group, the appearance of a new word, comparing it with some word previously given, the thought content aided by pictures, conversation, question, or its place in the context. To develop this ability, phrase drills are given with cards from the blackboard or bulletin, in games. For such drills, phrases directly associated with

children's experiences and activities should be chosen, since these direct their efforts to accurate interpretation and normal enjoyment while they are at work. The phrases and words needed to advance the progress of activities, and skill in reading should be emphasized.

The following report [11] of a reading period held early in the year with a group of both low and high first-grade children shows how the teacher stimulated accurate recognition by directing attention to the place of phrases in the content. This is one of the simplest means, and therefore one of value, to use first with beginning children.

This report also shows how the teacher provided opportunities to read for those high first children who were eager for it, while creating a situation which aroused the interest of the younger group in the process.

As a greeting for their morning social hour, the children had been learning to sing Good Morning to You. This song had been printed on the board and sung by the teacher first, then by the teacher and children together. They had much enjoyed it.

When the group returned from recess their teacher asked them to come together in front of the board. She had the "good morning" song still printed on the board.

T. Now we are going to have a chance to learn this song a little better, and you may listen while I sing it clear through. (She then sang the song, holding a yard stick under the lines as she did so. While the children listened intently she sang the song through twice.)

T. Now, I am going to sing just the first two lines. You see if I do it right. (Quite by accident she sang the third line. The children checked her on her mistake and laughed about it. The teacher then sang part way through; suddenly she stopped and a puzzled expression appeared on her face.)

T. I seem to have forgotten what comes next. Maybe you can help me remember the words I have forgotten. (The children looked earnestly at the song printed on the board and suddenly one of them cried out, "dear children." This performance was repeated several times. The children watched and told the teacher phrases which she had forgotten. After repeating until the same phrase had been emphasized several times, the teacher said, "Can you show me where it says 'dear children' on the board?" Many little hands were frantically waved and the teacher selected a child who proudly pointed out the phrase "dear children.")

T. Do you see how quickly Jack is learning to read? Now, I am going to ask Constance to come up and put her hands around the part that says "good." (She had previously printed the phrase "good

[11] Part of a stenographic report of a day in the first grade University Elementary School, Berkeley. Miss Anne Raymond, teacher. Included by the courtesy of Miss Raymond and Dr. Aymer J. Hamilton, principal.

morning" in a separate place on the board.) Constance, who was one of the high first group, succeeded.

T. Now, put your hands around the part that says "morning." Now the part that says all of "good morning."

Then the teacher called Robert, who had never read. As he seemed timid she put her arm about his shoulder and they stood together at the board.

T. Robert, can you find where it says "morning" for Miss R——? (Robert put his hands around the word "good.")

T. (To the other children.) How many of you agree that Robert is right?

Ch. (Loudly and emphatically.) No!

T. (Going over to the place where the song was printed on the board with Robert.) Let's sing it all together and see where the word "morning" is.

The children sang the song with her and then Robert made two more trials to find the word "morning" and failed.

T. Well, let's sing it again. I am sure Robert can find it. (This time Robert succeeded in surrounding with his hands the word "morning.")

T. Isn't it fine that he found it so soon. (The same procedure was followed for the phrases "to you," "dear children." During all this time there was no evidence that the children were tired of the fascinating new game. All were participating eagerly.)

T. Now, let's close our eyes. We are going to have another game—and let's play fair! No peeking! (When all eyes were closed at last, the teacher erased the phrase "dear children.")

T. Open eyes! Now, let's look at it to see if it's just exactly the same. (In just an instant several children jumped to their feet and said "No! You have changed it.")

T. What is wrong?

Ch. You erased something.

T. (Looking very surprised.) I erased something? What was it?

Ch. (After a little more looking.) "Dear children."

The teacher pointed out the phrase to emphasize it and said, "Yes; you found the right words. I did erase them. Let's close our eyes again. Maybe something else will happen." When the eyes were closed she printed into the phrase the name "Miss Raymond," her own, where "dear children" was before.

T. (After the eyes were opened.) Did the same words come back?

Ch. (Energetically.) No.

T. Didn't they? Well, something came back didn't it? I wonder what it is? (Children looked and one of them said, "Children, up there." Pointing to where the word "children" had been printed in another place.)

T. Yes; that does say "Children" doesn't it? (At that moment a child in the high first grade called out, "It says 'Miss Raymond!'" He had learned the name in the low first period.)

T. Yes; it says "Miss Raymond." Shall we sing the song now with the new words? Then, when you come into school in the morning sometimes you may sing it to tell Miss Raymond good morning. (The children joined heartily in singing the song.)

In eliminating difficulties with pronunciation and enunciation it is suggested that the teacher "present good models at all times. Depend primarily on the imitation of right models in correcting and refining the speech habit of pupils," and "avoid the restraint of freedom and spontaneity in speech that results from frequent criticism." [12]

6. *Development of an interest in words as a basis for discrimination in word values.*

Most little children experience delight in the sound of words, particularly those which make a direct appeal to the sense through describing sounds, tastes, smells, the feeling of things. The cultivation of this pleasure is an important step in the development of discrimination in words value, and so, of the pleasure in reading. It leads to more thoughtful attention to written words used for the interesting sound, and so to greater accuracy of recognition. Encouraging the use of interesting sound words, for instance, when children tell about what they have seen or heard on trips is one means of preparing for such discrimination. The children who made the following story were becoming sensitive to sounds and the descriptive value of words:

OUR TRIP TO THE ICE PLANT

We went to the ice plant.
We saw them making ice.
Z-z, ding, ding, ding.
Around go the big belts!
They go very fast.
We went up stairs.
See the steam.
Oo-oo-oo, how cold it is!
In goes the water.
See the ice in the cans.
Out comes the ice.
Bang! goes the ice.
It hit the wall.
Paddle, paddle, paddle, goes the board.
It pushes the ice down into the storehouse.

There is dramatic quality in this story, too, which reveals a teacher sensitive to this value, who has encouraged the children to enjoy drama wherever it may be found.

[12] Op. cit., p. 34. P. 29.

# Chapter IV

## The Reading Table in the Primary Grades[1]

"Ask a little I-B (child) what he wants to do and, among many things, almost invariably will come the response, 'I want to learn to read.' What would it mean if we could hold this interest throughout the child's school life!" [2]

The classroom reading table, sometimes called also the "library" or "browsing table," may be a very large factor in holding this interest and developing children's love for reading. In nearly every classroom space may be found where such a table may be attractively arranged, and frequently the skillful teacher can create situations in which children will themselves plan and furnish the desired corner or table. In the kindergarten children have had a place where they could pore over fascinating picture books; they will wish to continue this pleasure in the first grade. If they have been deprived of the experience in kindergarten or home environment, they may not themselves take initiative in bringing books or planning a library corner. Situations may then be arranged by the teacher to direct attention to books in a natural way. A few good pictures and story books may simply appear on a low table or on shelves easily accessible to children, and from some of these the teacher may read to the group. When these are returned she may tell the children that there are other books here which they may wish to see during free times.

A child's interest in books is a matter of growth. He may be helped toward book-consciousness by the way in which the teacher talks about books. Her feeling for them will be reflected in what she says and how she says it. Children are very quick to catch this feeling and will be much more likely to give closer attention to a book the next time one is presented.

A desirable curiosity about books is fostered through pictures. The teacher may make some general comments concerning the book she holds, and follow this by showing interesting pictures in the book. Children may suggest that they have something like it at home or the teacher may ask if they have pictures in their home books, suggesting that the class might like to see these. The children will be stimulated to bring their books to school. Much is made of books brought from home and the child who brings one has added recognition. This enterprise is contagious and other books will follow—

[1] Adapted from a report contributed by Miss Clara Kaps, State Teachers College, Chico.
[2] "From a First Grade Classroom." Pasadena School Bulletin, December, 1928.

usually, the favorites from home—books that often have nothing more significant than a favorite picture. Later, books from which mother reads make their appearance and the teacher also reads from them. Sometimes a child will read a page or two and the teacher will finish the story. These books may be placed on the reading table for the perusal of the children during their free time that morning.

If undesirable books are brought in they are treated merely as books and put aside, but recognition is given to the child who brought them. Or the teacher may note the subject matter of the book and tell the children of others she knows (containing matter relating to similar interests, but more desirable) and promise to bring these for them to see. Usually, if the latter are attractively made, they will draw the children's interest away from the undesirable books.

The teacher increases the attraction of the table by judiciously adding books she has herself selected. She places there also a few well-chosen pictures mounted on heavy cardboard, which may later have simple stories attached. She changes books often. Almost every other day a new book should appear, and one of the earliest ones to arrive may disappear. Later these books may be brought back and read again with both pleasure and benefit. She discusses with the children ways and means of making the table attractive and interests herself in any worth-while plans they may have of decorating it or adding to its pleasures and conveniences. She frequently sits at the table with the children gathered about her so that they may enjoy books together, and at these times, through her own enjoyment of the most desirable books, she creates a sensitiveness in children to their good qualities. She arranges the daily schedule so that the children all have some free time during the day to spend at the table. Of this first early use of reading material no check-up is advisable excepting the noting of growth of interest, or its lack. The purpose is accomplished if children acquire a fondness for browsing in books.

For this reason the reading table should make its appeal to all the children of the group of whatever abilities and interests. On it should be placed some very simple books, even a few primers on the second and third grade table, and a few books more difficult to read than the basic text. There should also be a larger number which are just a little easier to read than this text. Reading abilities of children in every grade cover a wide range. There are always a few children who can forge ahead into books much above grade level. Provision should also be made for variety in interests and for acquainting children with various forms of good literature. There should be a pleasing array of different kinds of books.

When activities emerge, books and pictures which extend children's interests and experiences in the activities should appear on the table. Thus the attention will be directed to books as a source of information

as well as pleasure. The building up of little room libraries related to various activities may become a profitable enterprise into which children will enter whole-heartedly. If the interest in such an enterprise is sufficiently strong, a trip to the school library might be arranged, at least for the older second-grade and third-grade children. This should be carefully planned in advance by the teacher and librarian and should be designed to interest children further; to give them pleasurable contact with the meaning and general purposes of the library; and to stimulate the improvement and increased use of the room library.

The interesting story of the planning of a second-grade room library is included here to show how such an interest may lead into a profitable activity.

## MAKING AND USING A LIBRARY CORNER[3]

### Second Grade

When the children of the low second class came together in the fall the schoolroom was not attractive or homelike. There was nothing in it but tables and chairs. The children suggested fixing it up with pictures, flowers, and curtains. The teacher had brought some books that she knew would appeal to second grade children. Some child spoke of these pretty new books, and another said, "I have a book just like this one at home." The teacher asked, "Where do you keep it?" "In the library," answered the child. This suggested to the group the desirability of setting off a part of the room for a library corner and making the necessary library furniture. Thus was launched what proved to be an interesting group activity.

Different members of the class told about the children's room of the public library. The class discussed what they should have in their library corner. They decided to make two bookcases, a library table, three magazine racks, book ends, four chairs, pillows for the chairs, and bookcase scarfs. Books were to be made by all the children; and later a writing desk was added. Each one chose what he wished to make during the industrial-arts period. These plans were written on the blackboard and later transferred to a chart. On the day when the children began working on the furniture, the child's name, his piece of work, and the date on which he began it were recorded on the chart. Later the dates when different pieces of work were finished were added.

The teacher had happened to find a round piece of wood on a scrap pile and had brought it to school. The two children who had planned to make the library table at once spied the round piece of wood and chose it for the table top. Other boys and girls brought in orange boxes and took them apart for lumber for the other furniture. All looked in industrial-arts books for suggestions for designs to use for

[3] This activity was carried on with the guidance of and reported by Miss Marie Hoye, teacher of second grade at the Alexandria Demonstration School, Los Angeles. Contributed by Miss Ethel I. Salisbury, supervisor.

their chairs, magazine racks, bookcases, and writing desk. They also observed the chairs in the room and elsewhere. After they had decided on how to make the furniture and had completed their planning, the hard work began. When certain difficulties came up, the group was called together for discussion of problems, criticism, and suggestions as to how to improve the work. The furniture was examined at definite periods during the making and the children asked to judge it. As work progressed the need arose for certain rules which were determined and upheld by the class. An example of these follows:

Finish what you begin.

Share your tools.

Help bring material even if you are not the one to use it.

Use soft voices.

Be sure to make the chairs strong enough so children can use them.

Originality was encouraged. Two different kinds of magazine racks were worked out. The book ends consisted of two bunnies cut from wood. These, with the table, chairs, bookcases, and magazine racks were painted green and decorated with a stenciled design of a little yellow chicken. Green and yellow were the colors chosen, as these had previously been selected for the color scheme for the room. The books made by the children showed much originality also, as well as marked difference in the ability of different children. Some brought pictures to illustrate their books, while others drew their own illustrations. Book covers were examined; colors that were attractive for covers were discussed. The form of books, including such items as titles, table of contents, location of authors' names, and date of publication, received attention at the proper time.

Some of the girls made oilcloth aprons for the other children to use while painting the furniture. They cut original patterns from paper, used them on the oilcloth as guides in cutting the aprons, and later bound the aprons with colored yarn. Scarfs were made of cream-colored theatrical gauze fringed and bordered around the edge with two shades of yarn. The children used a long and short stitch for these borders. The pillows were made of yellow cambric trimmed at the edges with green yarn.

When the furniture was finished the children printed this sign with a large printing press:

LIBRARY CORNER

SILENCE

The sign was placed where it could be seen by all, and the library was at last ready for use.

A discussion was held on the care of books, and the children read "How to Take Care of a Book," from the Learn to Study Readers.[4]

[4] Horn, Ernest, and Moscrip, Ruth M. Learn to Study Readers. Ginn, 1926.

This resulted in the drawing up of rules to govern conduct while they were using the library:

OUR LIBRARY RULES

Keep hands clean.
Turn pages carefully from upper right-hand corner of page.
Use a bookmark.
Put books back neatly.

Children kept bringing books from home. The teacher had brought many books from the city school library as well as from the public library. Before long there were 100 school books circulating in addition to those the children had brought. This naturally resulted in

At last the library was ready for use. Second grade, Alexandria Demonstration School, Los Angeles

some problems of book circulation, and turned attention to the need for a definite plan of keeping records of the books in use. The children found out how their mothers were granted the privilege of getting books to read from the public library, and through their discussions of library usages they determined upon the following plan: Each child was to have a library card, each book that circulated was to be marked with a number and also the number of the room. A child librarian was chosen and the books were checked out and back each Monday. Each child selected a book he wished to take home and the librarian wrote the number of the book on the child's library card. Books were loaned for one week. The children suggested that if a child forgot to return his library book on Monday he would have to pay a penny fine and he would not be allowed the privilege of taking

another book until his fine was paid. The fine money was to be used to purchase a library book. The teacher had a list of all circulating books and their corresponding numbers in order to be able to check up on books if any difficulty arose.

Thus Monday became "library day." When it was inaugurated, some child suggested making a writing desk for the librarian to use when she checked out books. This would also furnish a place for the children's library cards, pencil and "fine box." A fresh bouquet of flowers is now kept on the desk every day. A jute rug, about 24 inches by 40 inches in size, was woven for the library corner, on a wooden loom which was also made by the children. A screen stands at the back of the library corner on which the children hang appropriate pictures or charts. The children regard this corner as the most interesting spot in their room.

There is a period given each day, called "library period," in which each child selects any story he wishes to read. A chart is hung up at this time which reads: "This is our library period. We are trying to read without moving our lips. We must be very quiet during this period."

## OUTCOMES

It is evident that the children were developing, throughout this activity, many valuable habits, abilities, and attitudes; and that they were acquiring knowledge which was useful to them and would lead them to wider interests. The extent of their outcomes is suggested by the following brief outline:

*Development of desirable attitudes:*

- Appreciating the value of reading.
- Learning to take criticism without resentment.
- Having consideration for others.
- Approving of abiding by class rules.
- Approving of cooperation.
- Approving of dependability—of remembering to return books.
- Learning to assume responsibilities happily.
- Acquiring respect for books, and a sense of responsibility for their care.

*Growth of desirable habits:*

- Participating in class discussion when models are examined for criticism.
- Abiding by rules of group.
- Cooperating with others engaged in a common enterprise.
- Protecting clothing and school property when using paint and tools.
- Collecting and sharing materials for construction.
- Using initiative.

Planning work before undertaking it.
Completing work when it is once begun.
Using judgment in selecting materials.
Taking good care of books.
Reading for enjoyment during leisure time.

*Growth in abilities:*

Ability to use patterns.
Ability to use designs.
Ability to choose colors which harmonize.
Ability to judge materials.
Ability to plan and execute the plan.
Ability to express ideas clearly in group discussion.
Ability to think more clearly.
Ability to select interesting parts of books and describe these to classmates.
Ability to make selections of better reading material than were previously made.

*Growth in knowledge.*

Understanding of the purpose and usages of the public library.

Learning of the wide variety of worth-while literature which is in existence.

Acquiring needed information through the contribution of the school subjects, as follows:

1. Numbers: Knowledge of number facts through measuring the length or width of the leg of the chair, how far apart the shelves of the bookcase should be, how wide the shelves, how deep the magazine rack, how much lumber would be needed, the size of the pillows or length of the scarf, etc.

2. Reading: Knowledge and skill through reading library books and recommending them to classmates or telling about the part found most interesting. Knowing the titles of good books. Eliminating practically all vocalizing or lip movement. Appreciating a story read by a classmate from his library book.

Reading for enjoyment of leisure. Collecting interesting books of poetry for the library. Trying to compose poems to share with classmates. Reading poems to classmates. Widening interests through information of reading materials.

3. Drawing, writing, and spelling functioned in a natural situation throughout the progress of the activity, and the children increased in their skill in these.

4. Language: Growth in skill through expressing personal ideas relative to group problems. Reviewing books orally for classmates. Reading poems and other selections to class. Noting qualities of good literature while reading and discussing.

5. Industrial arts: Growth in knowledge and skill through solving problems involved in constructing with wood and cloth; in weaving, painting, stenciling, printing. Learning to select materials suitable for certain purposes.

## RECORDS OF CHILDREN'S READING USEFUL

When children can read simple stories some record of their reading should be kept, not only to help the teacher but to stimulate further the children's interests and efforts. In the first grade the teacher might select a set of simple stories for easy reading and give each story a color; or the class might choose the color. For instance, the Gingerbread Boy might be designated by the color "red." On a chart hung in the room the names of the children would be printed with spaces beside each name for color pasting. If a child read the story Gingerbread Boy and reported on it, he would be entitled to paste a red square or circle after his name on the chart. When he has read Three Billy Goats Gruff he pastes a blue circle after his name, if blue is the color chosen for this story. So the teacher can tell at a glance which stories are being most frequently read by the children and which each child is reading. The children desire to place more circles after their names and so are led to further reading.

This devise may be varied by using colored crayons instead of the paper circle, or a record such as the following may be useful. (In high first, second, and third grades a list of books that are on the reading table may be made on a long strip of wrapping paper and posted in a conspicuous place.)

*Books in our library (October 5–10)*

| | John | Mary | Susie | May | Eleanor | Etc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Johnnie Crow's garden | | | | | | |
| 2. Indian primer | | | | | | |
| 3. Pantomime primer | | | | | | |
| Etc | | | | | | |

Each child checks in the space below his name the book read and either draws something in the space to tell what the story was about or writes in the page number or title of the story.

In the second grade, large sheets of unprinted newspaper may be marked off in vertical sections and a section assigned to each child in the room. In this section or space the child writes his name. When a child draws a book he writes the name of the book and the date when drawn under his name on the chart. In the same way he records the

name of the second book with date under the first. This kind of record not only shows which books the children are reading but how many days a child spends reading a book. Too rapid reading may then be checked and reading that is too slow may be investigated.

Another attractive and useful record may be made by older groups in this way: Small paper covers representing each book in the room library are made by children according to their own ideas. These are pasted by the back covers on a large chart. As each child completes the reading of a book he writes his name and the date inside the small representation.

In the third grade, library cards and box to hold them may be used for a record. The child's name is written on a card and below it the name of the book drawn and the date. The next book is recorded under the first or on a separate card. Children may have as many cards as necessary, but the teacher keeps them or they are placed in a file where they are always accessible. This record is a permanent one. Its value is greatly increased if children are interested in writing on these cards their opinions or simple résumés of the books. They may be interested in doing this to help other children of the group select good books to read, or as a service to children of the entire school through placing their discussions of books in the school library where other children may have access to them. Such an enterprise offers the teacher a valuable point of departure for discussions as to why some books are more attractive, interesting, and desirable than others. Group standards may be greatly improved thereby. In group discussions of books there may be consideration of such questions or individual reports such as those suggested below which will eventually result in permanent records:

Kindergarten—

What book did you look at?
What was it about?
Show us the picture you liked best.
Do you know where to find a book about_____?

First grade (added to above questions)—

Did you find anything that you can read?
Read the part that you liked to read. Why did you like it?
Did you find any stories that you know?

Second and third grades (individual reports)—

Name of the book.
Author.
Kind of book: Fairy, animal, adventure, history, travel, fables, poems.
Names of chief characters.
Do you like it? Why?
Is it a book that all should read? Why?

A questionnaire similar to the following ones is another convenient plan for keeping a record of stories read. It serves as a guide to the teacher in directing the child's reading as well as a stimulus to the child himself. As soon as the child can read the questions and write 1-word answers he can make the record independently. Before that time the teacher may ask the questions of the child and record his answers herself. (It would of course be impossible for a teacher to do this for any but those particular children who require special remedial work.)

If possible to furnish mimeographed copies of these questionnaries it is desirable that one be filled out for each book read. They are then made into a loose-leaf book which the child keeps and enlarges each year. It is possible to make use of the questionnaire by giving only one copy to a child, however. The copy may be pasted in a notebook and loose slips of paper used for the 1-word answers.

## BOOK REPORT FOR PRIMARY GRADES[5]

University of California at Los Angeles

Pupil's name_____ Age_____

Grade_____ Date_____ _____School

Name of books_____

Answer as many questions as you can.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Could this story be true? | 1. |
| 2. Is the story about people, animals, fairies, or what? | 2. |
| 3. Which character or person do you like best? | 3. |
| 4. Name one you do not like. | 4. |
| 5. Is the story funny? | 5. |
| 6. What place does the story tell about? | 6. |
| 7. Does the story teach us to be kind, helpful, polite, fair, obedient or thoughtful? | 7. |
| 8. Would you like to read this story again? | 8. |
| 9. Could some children play this story? | 9. |
| 10. Did you read the story yourself? | 10. |
| 11. Who wrote the story? | 11. |

[5] These record forms were constructed by Mrs. Helen Bass Keller, supervisor of training, University of California at Los Angeles, with the assistance of the University Extension Class, Education 336 AB., December, 1926.

## BOOK REPORT FOR MIDDLE GRADES

University of California at Los Angeles

Pupil's name_____ Age_____

Grade_____ Date_____ School_____

Name of book_____

Answer as many questions as you can.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. What kind of a story is it? (History, adventure, science, mystery, home life, etc.) | 1. |
| 2. Is it a story that might have happened? | 2. |
| 3. Is the story funny, sad, exciting, dull, instructive, or just interesting? | 3. |
| 4. Which character or person would you like to be? | 4. |
| 5. Name one other character in the story. | 5. |
| 6. What place does the story tell about? | 6. |
| 7. Is the story about Indians, pirates, war, inventions, grown-ups, knights, the sea, children, or other lands? | 7. |
| 8. Is the story for girls or boys or everybody? | 8. |
| 9. Is it like any other book you ever read? | 9. |
| 10. Is so, what was the name of the other book? | 10. |
| 11. Did you like the story so well that you wanted to finish it before doing anything else? | 11. |
| 12. Would you care to read the book again? | 12. |
| 13. Who wrote the story? | 13. |
| 14. Did you read all of the book yourself? | 14. |

The participation of second-grade and third-grade children in recording their reading which led to vital enterprises for them and a service for their schools is described in the two accompanying reports. Their teachers have added suggestions for developing the enterprises and interpretation of their outcomes.

## The Reading Table and its Outgrowth [6]

### SECOND AND THIRD GRADES

The enterprise which I wish to discuss is an outgrowth of the class-reading table. In this high-second grade the children find real enjoyment in the books of their room library. Most of these books contain short stories; there are only three volumes containing continuous stories.

It was planned at first to have the children check their reading record in black if they completed a whole book and in red if they read but one of its stories. Observation revealed that most of the children were sufficiently interested to read all of the stories in the selected books. Those who asked to take books home overnight almost always completed the reading of them before the next morning. Since the teacher wished the children to be entirely free to select single stories from a number of books or to read one book through, it was later planned to have the child check in one color only and to place the check after the title of the book when he had read all he wished to read in that particular volume.

During the free work periods two or three little friends often went to the reading table at the same time and discussed with one another which books contained the best stories. This led to a group discussion in which it was decided that it would be a good plan to have a reading club for the purpose of helping the children decide which books contained good stories. Various suggestions were offered. It was finally decided to have any child who had finished a story tell the class why he liked it.

The children read so fast, and so many stories were waiting to be reviewed that some plan had to be devised to spread the news more quickly to those waiting to hear it. The class therefore decided to write their review of the stories on the board so that each child could more readily select books which interested him.

At first the children seemed inclined to reproduce the whole story when they should have been telling or writing the name of the story with their reasons for liking it. To overcome this difficulty the group decided that reviews written on the board were to be read to the class so that suggestions might be given for their improvement. The

[6] This report was written by Miss Clara H. White, vice principal, Jefferson School, San Francisco. It was contributed by Miss Julia Letheld Hahn, director, kindergarten-primary department.

improved reviews were then to be written on paper and placed in a little folder belonging to the author.

There were a great number of reviews to be criticized; and the time consumed in writing them on the board and on paper was so great that the group decided it would be best to have reports only twice a week. This did not limit the reading at all but gave each child an opportunity to select further from the number of stories he had read the one which interested him most. It thus called for the development of more discrimination and judgment. The reviews were written on the board first, then criticized, then placed on paper for the folders just as had been planned. Each lesson seemed to bring improvement in the arrangement of reviews and in the children's ability to select and organize pertinent information. The writing also improved. After Christmas each child wrote a special story telling what he had received for Christmas, and also a letter of thanks to Santa Claus. The language work has improved greatly through this constant practice. Interest is intense, and the class has enjoyed the club enterprise very much.

All were very proud of their record books and took them home to their parents at the end of the term.

The teacher asked to see their books so that she might make a report of their work and copy their records. The class held a meeting in which eight books were selected and submitted to be placed in the principal's report, these having been chosen as very good work. A special request for the return of these books to their owners came with the delivery of the books.

I am sorry that the term has closed for this class, but perhaps their reading-table activities may continue to grow along the same lines in the low third grade. I had hoped that this class might work out a card-index system by using a case with little cubby holes in which to keep accessible cards listing the books in alphabetical order under authors' names. These children are already accustomed to giving the titles of books and their reason for liking certain ones. They have had practice in reproducing stories for the pleasure of others. Now they might form a reading club or a library center which would be of real value to the class and also provide a record of class participation. The absence of their new class teacher during which I took charge of the group gave an opportunity for renewed contact. Having enlisted their teacher's interest, I attempted to see whether the children were interested in such an enterprise as I had in mind, and how they might plan it.

During the group discussion I said that I intended to show their record booklets to a number of teachers from different schools, and I felt that if I had only eight, some teachers would have to wait to see

the books. Those who had taken their booklets home volunteered to bring them back. I then asked them how they intended to continue keeping their records this term. It would be a shame not to follow up their good work in keeping records for others to use; not to make some plan.

We have a public library next door. I had seen many of the children in the children's room at different times, so I asked if anyone knew how librarians keep records of their books. Many volunteered information such as that the librarian keeps cards having the borrower's name on them and puts these cards with the names of the books taken out; that the librarian has a box with all the cards in it; that one looks in a drawer for the cards telling about books. "They have the name of the book and the man who wrote it on the cards." Here we learned the word "author." After a little more discussion we found out that a short account of what the book contains is also on the record card. Then I asked how the librarian was able to find the card for the book that was requested when she had so many. Some said she knew just where to look for it. Finally Andrew said, "She puts them like the alphabet." I asked what he meant by the alphabet and he said, "A, B, C." A little further discussion led to the information that books are indexed according to the authors' names and the first letter of the author's name tells where to find the book.

I asked the children to suggest some way in which they might keep an index record similar to the one in the library so that other children could still find out what the stories they were reading were like.

Lloyd suggested a drawer. Another child suggested "a thing like a letter holder." When we said that we wanted it spread out where all could see it, Eleanor suggested a box with little holes. Eloise said that we could paste the right letters above the holes. Then we planned a long flat box divided into sections, with a letter over each section. In the sections all cards representing their books could be placed. If the author's name began with A the card for that book would be placed in section A, and so on for all the other sections.

Cards of medium size might be furnished upon one side of which the title, the author's name, and short accounts of the story might be written by children who had read it. The review selected for this purpose could be worked out in a manner similar to that used for obtaining the reports previously described. It could be arranged so as to give a clear idea of the type of story contained in the book. Its purpose would be to guide children in the selection of stories by helping them quickly to find a story in which they would be interested. On the reverse side of each card the children who read the story might place their names. The number of names appearing on the back of the card would tend to show how popular the stories were.

If any child thought that a better account of a particular story could be given than the one appearing on the card, he might submit one to the class for approval. If they accepted his in preference to the one already there he should be permitted to place his account on a card and clamp it over the card in the card index for future use.

At the beginning of the term when there were no records in the card index or when records were being placed there one by one, children might be led to judge as to the type of stories contained in the books by reference to the tables of contents. They are familiar with the existence of the tables of contents from their introduction to books, and no doubt many would already be using them. This device might be used to help the slow and more dependent children, thus training them to use thought and judgment and forming valuable habits.

Thought getting in reading might be encouraged by such devices as making book covers, suggestive of the stories read, from cut paper to be hung in the library or reading club corner for decorative purposes. On it could be printed the title of the illustrated book. Illustrating some interesting scene in a story also requires thought and application. Insight into the child's actual reading ability is gained by noting his interpretation of silent reading. Therefore various similar devices are helpful to both teacher and child.

This enterprise, as carried out in the high-second grade, has proved valuable to the children. They have learned to judge reading materials and choose carefully with a view to the enjoyment and satisfaction to be derived. They have learned to value cooperation, consideration of and helpfulness toward others by presenting records of their stories for class use. They are being trained to clear thinking and concentration; and to reading with a purpose. They have learned to care for and to appreciate books. If a careless child gets marks or "dog ears" on a book, others are quick to complain. The enterprise has been carried over into the homes. Children have interested their parents in story books and several copies have been loaned to the reading table. A decidedly greater interest in reading has developed, and many attractive books came as presents to the children at Christmas.

In contrast to Froebel's statement that reading is the "scourge of infancy," we have found it to be the pleasant road to the fascinating world of children's books.

The enterprise has also had desirable outcomes in the development of reading skills. Writing the accounts of stories in the record booklets eliminates all chances of reading so rapidly that children derive nothing from the story. It also prevents merely skimming over a number of books to increase the number of checks on the reading record which might occur if a child were striving merely to obtain class approbation. The combination of the two records tends to increase the number of books read, hence the speed of the reading, and also the

intensity of thought and application necessary to bring about an understanding of the stories. One record provides a check upon the other.

The keeping of such records tends to bring about all-round development. The child not only reads and acquires what he reads; he also trains his mind to condense the story read and choose the important parts. He trains himself to put his thoughts in clear form that others may understand them and profit by them. He trains himself in writing, in language, and in punctuation. He is becoming a functioning social being in his particular groups.

Dr. E. L. Thorndike said, "To read means to think as truly as it does to evaluate, or to invent, or to demonstrate, or to verify." Reading is thinking. What we hear or see are the reactions or responses. If we call for and demand reactions which require thought getting, then the child will expect his reading work to have meaning. Reading responses that require understanding of what is read vary with grade and ability but they must exist.

## Learning About Books Through A Classroom Library[1]

### THIRD GRADE

On the first day of school the children inquired eagerly what they might take up as their activity for the new term. They had been very much interested in a book pageant recently given by the sixth grade, and when reminded of this pageant began to discuss the possibility of giving such a play themselves. They considered the work necessary to carry out the plan. Some children thought immediately of costumes and scenery but on further questioning decided that books must be read in order to select favorite characters and learn about adventures of such folk. The idea of giving a play from a book was conceived and received most enthusiastically. The need for extensive reading in order to give a book play was recognized. There were talks about favorite books and many children offered to bring particularly interesting books to school. The need for a means of caring for the books and for keeping a record of their use was recognized, and a decision reached.

It was evident to the group that if they were to make extensive use of one another's books or of borrowed books they would need a room library. They decided that the planning and carrying on of such a library, with the ultimate purpose of obtaining the information necessary to give a book pageant of their own (which was to be in the form of a puppet show), would be a desirable activity for the new term.

[1] This report was written by Miss Mary Daly, third grade teacher at the West Portal School, San Francisco. Contributed by Miss Julia Letheld Hahn, director, kindergarten primary department.

The teacher also felt that this activity would be valuable. In her mind it had the following specific objectives:

1. To create in the children a love for books.
2. To stimulate individual library reading which is so necessary in the third grade.
3. To help the children to appreciate the easy access to books today compared with earlier times.
4. To give a general idea of the way in which a book is prepared for the printer.
5. To help children understand the evolution of bookmaking and printing from the earliest times.
6. To lead to an appreciation of books and right habits of handling them.
7. To develop initiative and originality in expression of ideas through making the puppet show.
8. To lead to further development in abilities to think clearly, express thoughts orally and in writing, to plan and execute carefully, to exercise judgment, to work together.
9. To lead children to gain needed insight and knowledge.
10. To extend children's interests.

In the ensuing discussions it was determined to visit a neighborhood public library in order to learn how such an institution is conducted. Before this trip was taken, the group compiled a list of questions which they hoped to answer through observation at the library. Some of these questions were:

1. What is the library for?
2. What must you do to take books out?
3. How old must a child be in order to join the public library?
4. How long can you keep books?
5. Why do you need a library card?
6. Where does the library get the books?
7. Why must we be quiet in a library?
8. How does the librarian keep track of the books?
9. Why must we pay fines on overdue books?
10. What is done when people tear books?
11. How do we know when to return books?
12. What are the duties of a librarian?
13. What are the duties of the people who borrow books?
14. Who pays for libraries?
15. How many public libraries are there in San Francisco?

On the day following the trip to the library, children brought books, boxes for use in making bookcases, and 3-ply wood of which to make book ends. A room library was put into immediate operation without waiting until the equipment was finished. It was decided to elect a

librarian and assistants each week. This librarian was to be held accountable for all of the books. He was to check each book when it was borrowed and to hold the borrower responsible for its prompt return and its condition when returned. This plan was carried out. The librarian and assistants were weekly elected through the use of parliamentary procedure (which in itself provided valuable practice for the children). Books were much borrowed and well cared for.

In addition, the class decided to keep records of what each one read. When a child finished reading a book he recorded the following important points:

1. Name of book—author.
2. Kind of story. (Whether fairy story, adventure story, etc.)
3. Characters in the story.
4. Five important things that happen in the story.
5. The favorite part of the story.

These book reports were filed and kept as class references. The children were allowed to read one another's résumés, and to choose books accordingly. Pictures of the favorite characters were drawn and painted and were used on a large poster which represented "The road to bookland." This was the children's own plan of stimulating interest in certain books. Scenes were painted illustrating parts of stories which had been read. Life-sized colored drawings of the characters of the "Oz books" were also used as room decorations. One child made a peep show illustrating a chapter from a book which he had read. This led other children to picture scenes from books they had enjoyed. These peep shows were very interesting, not only to the children of the group but to the children of other classes as well.

A very old German Bible was brought to class and the printing and organization examined. The type of printing and the binding were compared with our present-day edition. The clasp was most interesting to the children and the script noticeably different. Another child brought a copy of a page from the Gutenberg Bible. This led to the development of another phase of the activity—a discussion of how books were made in earlier times. A very complete exhibit of the evolution of books, collected and made by a sixth grade, was obtained. This exhibit included a scroll, an authentic copy of a horn book, a clay tablet, and samples of different kinds of paper. New questions arose in large numbers, and a list of these was compiled as follows (the list included some questions asked by the teacher also):

1. Who is the author of a book?
2. What does the publisher do to the book?
3. What is an index? Of what use is it? Give another name for it?
4. What are the pictures in a book called?

5. What is the first illustration in a book called?
6. Who are the characters of a story?
7. Of what use is the introduction?
8. What is the dedication of a book?
9. What is the copy of the book made by the author called?
10. How are the illustrations in a book made?
11. What is a bookplate?
12. How are books printed?
13. Were books always printed as they are to-day?
14. Who invented the printing press? When?
15. How was printing done before the invention of the printing press?
16. Did we always have paper books?
17. What kind of books did the Egyptians have?
18. What are hieroglyphics?
19. Tell how clay tablets were made and used.
20. Of what is paper made?
21. When was paper first made?
22. Tell how rag paper is made.
23. What is papyrus?
24. What was it used for?
25. How was papyrus made into writing material?
26. With what did the Egyptians write upon clay tablets and papyrus?
27. When was paper first made in the United States?
28. Did the early Chinese have paper like ours?
29. How did they make theirs? Who found out this way?
30. What are horn books? Who used them?
31. Tell how ink is made.
32. Did we always have an alphabet?
33. What does the word "alphabet" mean?
34. How are books bound?
35. What is parchment?
36. What is a deckle?
37. How did the monks help to preserve our books and learning?

The children who could not find the information which would answer the questions in their home libraries had access to mimeographed material and clippings supplied by the teacher and to books on the class library table. Mimeographed reading lessons supplemented some of the textbook reading lessons. It was very interesting to find some children bringing chemistry texts and talking about chlorides, forest preservation, woodpulp as if it were a very natural thing, and thoroughly understanding what they were discussing. Quite an extensive vocabulary was acquired

The children made an exhibit of their own, based on the sixth-grade exhibit. They were very much interested in the horn books and decided it would be a fine idea to make individual horn books for their mimeographed reading lessons. These proved a constant source of pleasure to the children and their novelty provided another incentive to read often.

All of the work of this activity was managed through committee work. A capable child was made chairman and his committee members were responsible to him for all of the work assigned to his special committee. The children accepted the responsibility and challenged any member who failed to do his share. During the morning group-discussion periods plans were made for the day's work. Information secured and new books obtained were brought to class and discussed.

### OUTCOMES OF THE ACTIVITY

The children were profitably engaged in this activity during the entire term, and its outcomes were rich in the extension of experience, increase in insight and knowledge, and development of skill and desirable attitudes and habits. These are more specifically described by the following brief outline:

*Growth in desirable attitudes.*—The children acquired an appreciation of the contribution of the earlier civilization. They recognized the importance of other ages and the effect upon our present civilization. They realized the change in processes of printing and book-making, and saw the improvement and advantages of present-day books over those of the past. They seemed to have a greater interest in books and a desire to take better care of them.

*Development of valued habits.*—The habit of going to books for needed information as well as for pleasure was strengthened.

The habit of caring for books was stimulated.

The habit of using the library was begun.

The habits of planning carefully before undertaking a piece of work, of cooperating, of exercising judgment while carrying out plans, were strengthened.

*Increase in insight and knowledge; extension of meaningful experiences.*—Learning about the operation of the public library.

Learning how books are made and sharing some of the processes involved.

Learning something of the relation of life of the past to present civilization; of the contribution of earlier men to the arts of to-day.

Acquiring information and skill in its use in various fields, as shown by the use of the school subjects:

1. Reading:

(*a*) Cooperative stories about activities, such as—

Our library.
The story of paper.
The story of papyrus.
How to use a book.
Horn books.
How to care for books.

(*b*) Silent reading and checking:

Reading of mimeographed material, on such topics as—

How paper is made.
What paper is made of.
The history of paper.
The story of papyrus.

False and true, multiple choice and completion tests.

(*c*) Library reading—

To find answers to questions.
To choose characters for puppet show.

(*d*) Group audience reading—

Usually mimeographed material or parts from books that answered certain questions.

(*e*) Through these varied activities the reading ability of the children improved greatly and their reading vocabulary was much extended. The growth in vocabulary is indicated by this list of words with which they became familiar—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| parchment. | publisher. | pith. |
| Nile River. | character. | English. |
| scroll. | clay tablet. | frontispiece. |
| printing press. | swamp. | writing material. |
| dedication. | numerals. | papyrus. |
| Rosetta Stone. | Chinese. | Gutenberg. |
| picture writing. | invention. | indigo. |
| alphabet. | character. | contents. |
| Romans. | linotype. | hemp. |
| introduction. | ancient. | fiber. |
| index. | illustration. | deckle. |
| Egypt. | jute. | Greeks. |
| hieroglyphics. | horn book. | author. |

NOTE.—Examples of practice materials in reading prepared by the teacher will be found at the end of this report.

2. Language:

(*a*) Written—

Signs for room.
Signs for pictures.
Library rules.
Stories about activity.
Written book reports.
Original verses, such as Our Books, and Reading a Book, cooperative poems.

(*b*) Oral—

Telling stories read.
Discussion of questions.
Book reports.
Planning of work.

3. Social studies:

(*a*) Geography—

Map used to find Egypt, Nile River, China, Germany.
Overflow of Nile discussed in regard to clay for tablets.
Climate and conditions necessary for growth of papyrus were discussed and information found about them.
Use of forests in paper making was learned.
A study was made of how the climate of Egypt helps in preservation.

(*b*) History—

The Story of the Clay Tablets.
The History of Paper Making.
The Evolution of Writing.
The Story of the Rosetta Stone.

4. Science—information was acquired through reading, observation and experimenting as to—

How paper is made.
How papyrus was made into writing material.

5. Work with materials:

(*a*) Paint and crayons—

Illustrations of stories read.
Figures and background of peep shows.
Puppets.

(*b*) Wood and inside paint—

Book ends and cases.
Horn books.

(*c*) Paper—

Puppets.
Peep shows.
Poster.

(*d*) Clay—

Clay tablets.

6. Numbers:

Measuring poster.
Measuring authentic size of horn book.
Counting and keeping track of fines on overdue books.
Writing of dates in books, 10/6/28.
Problems involving dates, such as—

1. The first paper mill was built in 1690. How many years ago was that?
2. How many inches is a papyrus plant that is 6 feet tall? 12 feet? 4 feet? Find your answer by adding.
3. The printing press was invented in about 1423. How many years ago was that?
4. The Egyptians used writing about 3000 B. C. How many years ago was that?
5. There are 325 pages in a certain book; 175 have been printed. How many pages are left to be printed?

*Extension of interests.*—The activity led directly to the interest in modern newspapers, and resulted in the building of a class newspaper office and the printing of a class newspaper.

## Materials for Self-Directed Work

Following are two examples of mimeographed materials devised by the teacher for directing practice in reading during work periods:

I

### PAPYRUS

Choose the correct statements. Underline them in pencil.

1. Papyrus is a—
   (*a*) Tree.
   (*b*) Plant.
   (*c*) Bush.
2. Papyrus grows—
   (*a*) In southern Italy.
   (*b*) On the banks of the Nile.
   (*c*) In the swamps of Florida.
3. Full-grown papyrus is—
   (*a*) About 1 foot tall.
   (*b*) 16 inches tall.
   (*c*) 4 to 16 feet tall.
4. Papyrus is used for—
   (*a*) Making ink.
   (*b*) Making furniture.
   (*c*) Making writing material.

5. Papyrus flowers are—
   (*a*) Large and red.
   (*b*) Very fragrant.
   (*c*) Umbrellalike.
6. The leaves of the papyrus are—
   (*a*) Shiny.
   (*b*) Very long and narrow.
   (*c*) Not attached to the stem.

II

HIEROGLYPHICS

Hieroglyphics are Egyptian writings. We have some pictures of hieroglyphics in our room. Take a piece of paper. Draw some Egyptian hieroglyphics.

III

NEWSPAPERS

If the statement is true write "Yes" in the margin, if it is not true write "No."

1. The Chinese called their newspaper the Peking Gazette ..... 1
2. Early Roman newspapers were sold at news stands for 5 cents a copy ..... 2
3. All newspapers were printed by the printing press before 1400 ..... 3
4. Newspapers tell us what is happening at home and abroad ..... 4
5. Early newspapers were very small ..... 5
6. The Romans posted their newspapers in public places ..... 6
7. Advertisements help us in buying food, clothes, and other things ..... 7
8. Newspapers are now published mornings and evenings ..... 8
9. Social events are recorded in the "sports" column ..... 9
10. Reporters find and write up news ..... 10
11. Readers correct the news ..... 11

## DISCRIMINATION IN READING AND WIDENING OF INTERESTS MAY BEGIN AT THE READING TABLE

As soon as children begin to enjoy books, whether read to them or by them, they begin to form tastes in reading. Because much material that is undesirable is still published for children, and because wrong choices in books may lead to faulty conceptions of life, to wrong habits, or to mental stagnation, guidance of children's reading is imperative. The skillful teacher may make the classroom reading table a vital source of such guidance.

She recognizes that children's interests in reading will vary as much as their own personalities, and sees to it that the reading table or room library offers material which represents every type of wholesome experience within the range of her children's understanding. In

planning this selection she uses all good forms of children's literature available. She includes material that is chiefly informational in character as well as that which is recreational. Books that bring children knowledge of the great social and industrial activities of the world may also be "good literature." The development of the habit of reading such materials cultivates intellectual interests, leads to freedom of the imagination; and to creative endeavor as truly as the reading of fantasy, poetry, fiction. It can and should be made part of the child's "reading for fun." The activity program provides the teacher with a unique opportunity to open this field of literature to children. They need information in order to carry out every worthy purpose. If this information be supplied through attractive, well written books of undeniable literary quality, children will enter through it into a world of fact as fascinating as any fairy tale, and will develop the enviable habit of reading about the real world with as much delight as they find in reading about the dream world. So at an early age they will begin to accumulate a store of facts, an understanding of reality which will always be a source of both power and pleasure. Their interests will widen to include all phases of life experience.

A wide range of materials which particularly cultivate the child's imagination should also be found on the reading table. In nearly all children imagination is very active—and in nearly all it can be easily snuffed out or deadened by lack of sympathetic encouragement and lack of food. In how many adults does one find this "faculty of revealing things freshly and surprisingly" still very active? How many have fun with their own minds? How many actually create? How may imagination be cultivated? Largely, as other faculties are cultivated, through its exercise. And literature which releases the mind from unnecessary restraint—which is filled with things freshly and surprisingly revealed, which opens up the world of wonder, mystery, fantasy, boundless possibility, stimulates the imagination and permits children freely to exercise this faculty. It helps them to see more than the commonplace that exists in the world of reality.

Pleasurable contacts with many different kinds of books—their discussion and appreciation—will usually result in widening interests of children who have hitherto confined their reading to one interest or one kind of material.

The teacher also recognizes differences in emotional coloration of reading matter and selects a variety of stories and poems which foster the most wholesome emotions. She includes much that appeals to and develops the child's sense of humor as well as his appreciation of the beautiful.

The teacher selects books to meet the varying reading abilities represented by her class, so that all may begin where they are to

share the enjoyment of reading. She helps children to find those books which meet their individual needs and interests. By her own discussion of books, her own evident enjoyment of certain good qualities they possess, her effective oral reading of poems and stories which can best be presented orally, her constant friendly association with children during their periods of free reading, she influences them to desire and appreciate the good literature, the most suitable kind of informational matter, the program of varied reading.

To provide such skillful guidance, the teacher herself needs to understand what qualities make up this "good literature" and suitable "informational matter." She needs familarity with a wide range of children's reading materials. Are there any standards by which she may judge children's books as she is becoming acquainted with them?

## Qualities of Good Reading Material for Young Children

The following principles of selection, suggested by those who have made studies of children's interests and the literature available,[8] may help teachers to choose the best materials for the room library or reading table:

1. The ideas, phraseology, vocabulary, and illustration of the child's book should be *within the realm of his own experience.* They should represent objects, characters, and actions that can be understood or imagined by the particular child who is to use them. Appeals should be to genuinely childlike emotions.

2. Facts contained in the child's book should be truly represented; characterization involved should be true to life. This does not imply that books of pure fantasy, such as fairy tales or imaginative and nonsense tales should be excluded. It means that even among these tales those should be selected which give the child true representation of human nature; and that where facts of information about any phase of life are involved these should be sincere. Material likely to give distorted or false ideas of human nature or life conditions should be avoided.

3. The basic ideas of any story or poem should be ethically sound. They should never be such as to inculcate unworthy ideals of conduct or achievement. For this reason such stories as Little Red Riding Hood are now held somewhat in disrepute. Much better material of this type can and should be placed before children. Moralizing or preaching, however, is usually disliked by children, and rightly so. The story or poem should be so written as to stimulate the growth

[8] Compiled from the following sources: MacCullum, Mrs. Lucille, and Lynch, Mary H., A Study of Literature for Children Under Four Years of Age, Mimeographed Bull. No. 2, Nursery school, department of kindergarten first-grade education, Teachers College, Columbia University, February, 1929; Terman, L. M., and Lima, M., Children's Reading, Appleton, 1926; Troxell, Eleanor, Language and Literature in the Kindergarten and Primary Grades, Scribner, 1927.

of worthy ideals *that may be realized;* but preaching about these ideals does not stimulate their growth.

4. The material of the child's book should be so written as to stimulate the imagination and develop the appreciation of the beautiful. If it is so written it will appeal to the adult as well as to the child, as charming in thought and style.

5. It should increase the child's stock of knowledge that is useful and desirable.

6. It should result in a wish to read more good literature.

There are certain elements in literature that children always desire. The first is action; the second is human interest; and the third is imaginative appeal. There are other things that help to make a book interesting, but children do not always demand them as they do these three. They prefer direct discourse to indirect. They like colorful descriptions and names for everything. They like to have the place and time of the story or incident clearly indicated so that they may easily picture the scene in their own minds. They like humor, but it must be the "funny incident" kind, and not the satire of adult humor that through subtle quip and innuendo pokes fun at individuals and institutions. They will not tolerate preaching or moralizing unless it is so successfully concealed as not to be easily recognizable as such. Finally, they demand sincerity—a genuine unaffected treatment of whatever subject is chosen.[9]

7. The make-up of the book should be attractive and readable to the child. The following factors are chief contributors to attractiveness:

(*a*) *Illustrations.*—For young children these should always be colorful, if possible, and the attractiveness is increased if the colors used are strong rather than soft. The colors, however, should never be exaggerated; they should be true to life.

Illustrations should be numerous and so made that they represent ideas and experiences the child can understand. Upon them the youngest child must necessarily depend for much of his earliest information.

(*b*) *Binding, paper, type, and size.*—The substantial but attractive binding and cover should be chosen rather than the delicate, very expensive one; but in either case the cover of the book should be one that will appeal to the child's interest and imagination. A good grade of paper adds to the charm of a book and to its durability.

The size of type is an important consideration in the choice of books for young children, particularly. Too small type should be avoided; too large type may cause children's eye movements to be slower than their rates of comprehension, thus leading to slower, more tiresome reading.

For young children the book which is not too heavy or clumsy in size is desirable. Variety, however, is both desirable and inevitable here. Children often enjoy books small enough to suit their own small hands; the book with large pages is attractive to them when not too heavy to be well managed.

[9] Terman, L. M., and Lima, Margaret. Children's Reading. Appleton, 1926, p. 16.

There is much more to be said about the qualities that constitute "good literature" for children and make its form of presentation attractive. Out treatment has necessarily been incomplete, confined to a statement of general principles. The matter is so important that it merits more extended study. It is suggested that teachers may be of much assistance to those responsible for the choice of books used in their classrooms, if they will courageously undertake this extended study in addition to the other studies through which they continue to grow in skill. The following books and articles are suggested as particularly helpful sources:

Anderson, C. J., and Davidson, Isobel. Reading Objectives. Laurel Book Co., 1925. Chapter XV, particularly.

Baker, F. T., Studies in Appreciation. Teachers College Record. October, 1926, pages 117–146.

Dunn, Fannie W. Interest Factors in Primary Reading Materials. Bureau of publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, N. Y., 1921.

Hayward, F. H. The Lesson in Appreciation. Macmillan, 1915.

Huber, M. B. Children's Interests in Poetry. Teachers College Record. October, 1926, pages 93–105.

Leonard, S. A. Essential Principles of Teaching Reading and Literature. Lippincott.

Moore, Annie E. Literature for Primary Children. The Classroom Teacher. Volume III. The Classroom Teacher (Inc.), Chicago, 1927–28.

Terman, Lewis M., and Lima, Margaret. Children's Reading. Appleton, 1926. Part I. The Reading Interests of Children.

Troxell, Eleanor. Language and Literature in the Kindergarten and Primary Grades. Series on Childhood Education, edited by Patty Smith Hill. Scribner, 1927.

# Chapter V

## Building Fundamental Reading Habits

Much reliable information is now available to teachers in regard to the most effective reading habits which children can and should acquire. Several excellent books have been written on how to help children develop these habits. Because these books present teaching objectives and methods in so much more thorough a manner than is possible in the limited space available here, we shall not discuss this topic. The teacher is referred to the books listed on pages 94, 95, a selection of the best available on how to build essential reading habits.

The importance of building in children right habits of attacking and handling reading matter, can not, however, be too greatly emphasized. It is absolutely essential that teachers inform themselves thoroughly in regard to the results of the extensive research carried on in this field during the past 20 years and develop skill in correct methods of teaching children to read. The activity program provides innumerable situations which stimulate a favorable mental set toward reading in children; it leads to much more extensive and varied demands for reading; these facts bring to teachers added responsibilities for equipping children with such habits that they may use reading widely and with facility in extending their experiences.

Two insistent problems continually face the teacher who is conscientiously trying to meet these added responsibilities: (1) The problem of helping children who learn to read more slowly than the average child, or who encounter unusual difficulties; or who have already acquired ineffective reading habits; and (2) the problem of helping children to help themselves in overcoming deficiencies, and of providing sufficient practice in reading skills to a large number of children of varying needs.

To suggest practical means of meeting these problems, two sections dealing with them have been presented in the pages to follow: A, Suggestions for a Remedial Reading Program, and B, Self-Directed Practice Materials for the Primary Unit. Admittedly, both these sections are incomplete, because of limited space. It is hoped they will bring together for the teacher's convenience helpful suggestions for developing methods of meeting problems peculiar to their own classrooms, and will supplement the teachers' study of books on teaching reading with material not elsewhere readily accessible.

## A. SUGGESTIONS FOR A REMEDIAL READING PROGRAM [1]

It is the purpose of this section to outline a procedure that may be helpful and suggestive to teachers who are interested in the problem of remedial reading.

Because of the importance of reading in our whole educational plan, the poor reader is seriously handicapped throughout his school career as well as in adult life. Every classroom teacher should feel it her duty, therefore, to become skilled in diagnosing and remedying difficulties in reading.

In every normal group there are children who seem to profit little by group instruction, while many others receiving the same instruction make the expected progress from month to month. Teachers must know that these reading failures are not due, necessarily, to inadequate teaching of former teachers, nor to unwillingness or laziness on the part of the individual child. They must accept the situation as a natural one, and one which classroom teachers everywhere are facing continually. They must remember that children do not *choose* to fail, and that being failures, they can not help themselves out of their difficulty however earnestly they try.

### Initiating a Remedial Program

The remedial program should begin by measuring the achievement of the group. This can be done by the use of standardized tests. If such tests are not available, informal tests, made by the teacher herself, are of great value. Through them the teacher can discover those children who are weaker than the average and in need of special attention.

After having measured and classified her pupils, the next step is to analyze and diagnose the difficulties, which step is followed by the application of remedial methods and finally a remeasuring of reading achievements.

*Two types of reading skills involved.*—The reading skills fall into two groups—those concerned with the mechanics of reading, as word recognition, eye span, phonics, etc., and those related to problems of comprehension and interpretation. Due to the fact that comprehension depends upon adequate mastery of the mechanical skills, much emphasis must be placed upon the proper development of these skills. Fortunately, deficiency in the mechanics of reading is easily detected and often not difficult to diagnose.

[1] This section was prepared and contributed by Mrs. Helen Bass Keller, supervisor of teacher training, University of California at Los Angeles.

## Diagnosing Difficulties Through Group Reading

It is easy to classify certain pupils under such general terms as "slow," "careless," "unable to comprehend," "unable to recognize words readily," etc. Such judgments are, however, but the beginning in an effective remedial program. The classroom teacher has very little time to thoroughly examine the individual deficiencies of each of her 35 or 40 pupils. She can, however, adopt certain devices that are useful for diagnosing the difficulties without seriously interrupting her work.

*Recording reading habits.*—The following chart (Table I) is one device useful for diagnosing reading habits. It should be marked by the teacher while the pupils are reading orally. Only practices that are habitual should be recorded. A single instance of guessing at a word or pointing with the finger would not be an indication of a wrong habit. (Light crosses could be made for single instances, until enough are made to justify calling the practice habitual.)

The chart should be marked during the course of several oral reading lessons, preferably without the children's knowledge that their errors are being recorded.

It should be used at intervals during the year also. Other items may be added, or any of these omitted as the teacher sees fit. It is essential that something definite be recorded so that a starting point for remedial work may be discovered.

Though every child in the group is being analyzed, the teacher's attention should be directed to those whose wrong habits are most numerous and most serious. From the following record it will be seen that the habit of moving lips while reading silently is common to the entire group. It is likewise evident that *pointing* and reading word by word are the most serious problems for the group.

The child named Ruth has more wrong reading habits than the others in this small group, with a total of nine. Two others have seven habits checked.

With a classroom of 40 children such a record as this will guide the teacher in grouping the children for special remedial instruction.

(This chart is similar to one issued by Anderson and Davidson.)

Table I.—*Diagnosis of reading habits*

Teacher, Gene Clayton; number of pupils in class, 38; grade, A 2; school, Twenty-third Street; date, January, 1929.

Write pupils' names vertically at the head of columns. Mark an X in the space opposite each habit listed if the pupil has that habit. Total horizontal columns in last space on the right.

Mark at different times while children are reading, but without their knowledge.

| | Pupils' names—Group 1 | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Harry | James | Ruth | Max | Mary | Inez | Richard | Vernon | Total |
| Moves lips when reading silently | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | 6 |
| Points with finger | X | | X | X | | X | X | | 5 |
| Repeats groups of words | | X | | | | X | | | 2 |
| Looks at pictures for cue | | | X | X | | X | | | 3 |
| Looks up at teacher constantly | X | | | | | | | X | 2 |
| Reads word by word | X | | X | X | X | X | | X | 5 |
| Makes many sight errors | | X | X | X | | | | | 3 |
| Guesses at words | | X | X | X | | | | | 3 |
| Unable to attack new words | X | X | X | X | | | | | 4 |
| Spells out unfamiliar words | X | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Omits words | | X | X | | | | | | 2 |
| Inserts words | | X | X | | | | | | 2 |
| List other specific defects | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 6 | 7 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | |

*Recording difficulties in word recognition.*—Following is another record which may be made during an oral reading lesson in the primary grades. The teacher records errors as each child reads orally. Such a record should be made during five or six lessons. Individual difficulties in word recognition are readily discovered by such a chart. The cases seriously in need of remedial work can be segregated readily while others needing no help may be directed in independent reading.

Teachers of upper grades should use such a record for children having great difficulty with word recognition, only.

TABLE II.—*Word recognition record*

Name of pupil, Gene K.; age, 8; grade, B 2; teacher, J. C.

| Date | Name of book | Page | Said | For | Not recognized | Omit | Insert |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3/10 | Social Science Readers | 12 | who | how | second | to | |
| | Billy | | run | read | grade | | |
| | Times | | soon | some | mother | | |
| | | | | | helped | | |
| | | | | | letter | | |
| | | | | | many | | |
| 3/12 | Billy's | 16 | saw | said | listened | | |
| | come | | come | came | | | |
| | | | who | how | way | | |

(Place first and last word read in column headed "Name of book.")

Read the above record as follows: "Gene said 'who' for 'how,' 'run' for 'read,' 'soon' for 'some,' etc. She made no attempt to pronounce 'second,' 'grade,' 'mother,' etc. She omitted 'to.'"

In marking the chart place all words pronounced for the child in the "not recognized" column. If the pupil miscalls words and continues reading, do not correct him.

*Other informal tests.*—Many other tests should be devised by the teacher for the purpose of discovering reading difficulties. Lists of words may be dictated to the class after they have been instructed to write only the first letter of the words given. By this means children who have made no association between initial sounds and the written symbols may be discovered. Further diagnosis of those particular cases is then necessary.

*Standardized tests.*—Many excellent standardized tests, useful for measuring reading achievements, and for diagnosing difficulties, are now upon the market. Teachers should become familiar with these tests and if possible make use of them in the classroom.

## Considering the Effect of Current Practices

After diagnosing the difficulties in some such manner as is indicated above and before attempting to remedy individual deficiencies, it is often best to consider practices which have resulted in these wrong reading habits. Many methods and devices in current usage, while good in themselves, have been either misused or overused to such an extent that serious reading difficulties have arisen. In the following brief discussion some of these current practices are recalled in connection with the diagnosis. Any thoughtful teacher can analyze other phases of reading in the same way and should do so when diagnosing a case preparatory to beginning remedial work.

## Faulty Reading Habits Commonly Found

1. Child constantly looks at pictures for cue to word recognition:

In the recent emphasis upon reading for the thought rather than for oral expression teachers have encouraged children to look at the pictures to get the cue for the pronunciation or recognition of unfamiliar words. This practice has in it much that is good but when used too frequently has resulted in developing habitual looking at the pictures. This interferes with the correct movement of the eyes from left to right across the page and develops frequent oscillations of the eyes. This habit is difficult to correct. It encourages a further habit of guessing, which because of its frequent success discourages any effort to work out words independently. When there are fewer pictures and many more words the child becomes less able to help himself with unfamiliar words if he has become dependent upon pictures for the cue.

One child, who had a well-fixed habit of looking at pictures for the cue, failed to know the following words while reading a selection con-

taining 32 words: Mouse, they, lived, house, bit, mouse's tail, pray, puss, long. In the picture there were a cat, a mouse, a ball, a dish, and a jar. He was helped, therefore, in only one instance by the pictures, though each unfamiliar word induced another search for something in the illustration which would help.

*Suggested remedial work.*—A thorough discussion of the illustrations before the reading is begun, with special emphasis upon objects mention in the test, helps prepare for the unfamiliar words which are to be met.

Frequent use of material not accompanied by pictures also helps establish the habit of working out words from the content. Riddles, true-false statements, and yes-no questions are useful for this purpose.

In the case described above it was necessary to place a card over the picture while the child was reading in order to break up the well-fixed habit of depending upon illustrations for cues. Even after the pictures were covered the eyes constantly shifted from the line of print to the space where the picture had been.

2. Child points to each word as he reads it:

No good teacher would purposely develop the pointing habit in her pupils but many are doing so without realization of the fact. Children are natural imitators and almost unknowingly adopt the mannerisms of the teacher. Thus the teacher who at the board or chart places her hand or finger or the pointer under each word as the child reads will soon find her pupils pointing to each word as they read in the book. (This does not mean that a word must not be located by means of a pointer at any time. It refers only to the habit of following the words while reading is going on.)

Children who have formed bad habits of reading and who have even minor eye defects resort to pointing to words, saying that they can not keep the place otherwise.

*Suggested remedial work.*—Line markers are sometimes used to aid children in keeping the place and to prevent pointing. The line marker is a piece of cardboard or a stiff piece of paper cut about an inch wide and the length of the line in the reader. The marker is kept under the line which is being read. (Habitual pointers sometimes resort to the use of the corner of the marker as a pointer slipping it along under each word. This must be prevented, of course.) Use of the marker below the line prevents the proper eye movements from line to line and should be discontinued as soon as sentences are carried over from one line to the next. Placing the marker just above the line being read has been found advantageous though rather awkward.

Asking the child to hold his book with *both hands* helps to break up pointing by the simple means of keeping the hands busy at something else. Using the ruler or a strip of cardboard under phrases

on the chart or at the board serves to designate what is being read without pointing to words singly. The ruler is laid parallel to the line, and not used as a pointer.

3. Child omits many words while reading orally:

Many regressive movements of the eyes, looking at pictures for the cue, constant looking up at the teacher, or in fact, any movement of the eyes away from the line of print, may cause habitual omission of words. Remedies suggested for habitual looking at pictures and for losing the place may be helpful in correcting this defect also.

4. Child indulges in careless oral reading:

The child who omits many small words or miscalls them without stopping is often thought to be a poor reader. Undoubtedly he is a poor *oral* reader but may be a very rapid silent reader who is quite able to comprehend what he reads. His eyes may be able to move so swiftly along the printed line that his voice can not keep pace; hence the omission of the unimportant words which do not alter the meaning or interfere with the reader's comprehension of the material read. This may develop into a very bad habit of careless oral reading and of course should be checked in the beginning.

The careless oral reader may have formed such a habit through a wrong concept of the purpose of oral reading. So long as every other child in the group has the same material he feels no need of reading so that his audience may understand. In his effort to read smoothly and without hesitating he develops the habit of reading rapidly without attention to unimportant words.

*Suggested remedial work.*—The remedy for this lies in directing the child's attention to the real purpose of oral reading—namely, to impart information gained from the printed page to others not provided with the same printed matter. If this proves to be the cause of his careless reading perhaps the first step toward remedying the difficulty would be to discontinue oral reading entirely for this pupil except when there is a real audience situation. Then, only a limited amount of reading should be permitted and always with preparation beforehand.

If the carelessness is due to a lack of recognition of the words omitted or miscalled, the matter should be treated in a way similar to that recommended in the section which discusses word recognition.

5. Child reads word by word instead of phrasing:

The habit of merely calling words one at a time is the result of a number of practices of the early grades. Remedial treatment consists largely in avoiding further emphasis on these and in carrying out the suggestions included here.

An overemphasis on isolated words through too constant use of flash cards will often produce "word readers."

Printing the article before nouns on flash cards, in the beginning, such as "a dog," "the cat," "an egg," and later printing familiar

phrases of two or more words such as "the little girl," "the old woman," and such groups of words as "he said," "she cried," "he ran," will do much toward increasing the eye span and improving this condition.

Material with too many new words will obviously prevent phrasing, since the eye can not take in several words at a time when nonrecognition of certain words is blocking the whole process. Much easy reading is essential to the development of eye span.

Delaying the reading of phrases, sentences, and even entire "stories" too long also develops this word consciousness.

Forcing children to reread whole sentences because "a" was miscalled "the" or for other minor sight errors puts an undue emphasis on words which often results in an overconsciousness of them.

6. Child shows inability to work out the pronunciation of new words independently:

A child can not become an independent reader until he is able to work out or "sound out" new words without help. In order to do this he must have considerable knowledge of the phonic elements of words such as are found in the material which he is expected to read. This does not necessarily mean that he must have been taught reading by some one of the so-called phonic methods. After the child has had much reading experience with any good method of teaching reading, he should have a fair degree of skill in recognizing the sound elements of words. With this knowledge he should be capable of working out new words independently. A lack of ability to do so may mean that he needs some specific training in that direction. Under the section discussing "nonreaders," remedial work on this phase is included.

7. Child repeats words and phrases habitually:

One habit frequently found in oral reading is that of repeating groups of words. The child reads until he meets an unfamiliar word which he attempts to work out. He finally succeeds in getting it, or it is pronounced for him by the teacher. He then repeats the entire sentence and reads on until checked by another new word. The same procedure is followed again, either the entire sentence or three or four words just preceding the one causing difficulty being repeated. Such procedure is, of course, an attempt on the part of the child to make his reading sound "smooth," as the primary teacher often puts it.

Following is a stenographic report of the reading of a paragraph by a child who has this habit of repeating. In an attempt to read 34 words the subject pronounced 60 words. It will be seen that he reads until he failed to recognize a word. After the word was pronounced for him he repeated the three or four words preceding it, then read until another unfamiliar word was met.

EXACT READING OF A PARAGRAPH

Here were (dense)
Here were dense and (unbroken)
Here were dense and unbroken (forests)
Here were dense and unbroken forests, beautiful rivers, wide prairies and (miry), wide prairies and miry swamps.
There were birds, (snakes)
There were birds, snakes, and insects in great (variety), snakes and insects in great variety, also many wild animals, such as deer, bears, (buffaloes), such as deer, bears, buffaloes, wolves, and foxes.

*Suggested remedial work.*—Primary teachers often ask children to reread short sentences in order to get a smooth reading. It is perhaps legitimate to do this occasionally but such practice continued too long undoubtedly results in the habit described above. The child needs to know what it is to read without being checked by unfamiliar words and therefore should be provided with *much easy reading*. When new material is being presented, necessitating much prompting on new words the rereading should be done after several lines have been read rather than sentence by sentence. This is not so likely to develop regressive eye movements not habitual repeating.

In marked cases it is sometimes necessary to work individually with the child who repeats habitually. One remedial procedure which has brought results is as follows:

The teacher sits on the left of the reader. When an unfamiliar word is pronounced for the child by the teacher she covers the part of the sentence already read with a blank card so that the reader can not see the words he has just read. He is therefore unable to reread them easily and is encouraged to proceed with his reading. Practice of this sort continued for a brief period each day has broken up the habit of repeating after very few lessons.

8. Child has slow rate of reading:

Children who read very slowly are often "word readers" when reading orally and "lip readers" when reading silently. This indicates that the proper eye movements have not been developed—words, rather than phrases or thought units, being taken in by the eye. Overemphasis and overpractice on oral reading may develop such a habit. The constant articulation of the words tends to retard the eye movement. The final result is that the eye and the voice proceed at the same rate in silent as in oral reading and that lip movement takes the place of saying the words audibly.

*Suggested remedial work.*—Daily practice in silent reading involving comprehension and rate is effective in correcting this defect. The group is given interesting factual material to read silently. The teacher times them for exactly one minute, after which each pupil

counts and records the number of words he read. Following this five or more questions on the material read, requiring only one word answers, are given by the teacher. The children work independently writing answers on a slip of paper. These papers are marked and the results recorded along with the number of words read in the minute's time.

### EXERCISES FOR INCREASING RATE OF READING

Any set of "true-false" statements or "yes-no" questions may be used to increase rate of reading if the time element is involved. (Table III.) Care should be taken that no unfamiliar words are included. (Difficult material should not be used to develop speed in reading.) Answers should be indicated by plus or minus so as to eliminate the time required for writing the words. The child answers as many questions as he can in one minute, recording number of words read and the number of correct answers. After several trials an alternate set involving the same questions but changing the order, is used. Such practice as this engaged in daily has been found to be effective in increasing the rate.

TABLE III.—*Yes or no*

Directions:

Lay a strip of paper on the right side of this paper, and write your answers on it. Put + for yes, and − for no, after each question. See how many you can answer before your teacher says "Stop."

Child's name, John; date, 3/16/29; time, 1 minute; accuracy, 8 C; words read, 64.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Can a boy play ball? | 1. | +c |
| 2. Can a ship sail? | 2. | +c |
| 3. Can a train fly? | 3. | + √ |
| 4. Can a bird sing a song? | 4. | +c |
| 5. Can a duck sing a song? | 5. | −c |
| 6. Can a house run away? | 6. | + √ |
| 7. Can a fly run and jump? | 7. | + √ |
| 8. Can a dog sing? | 8. | + √ |
| 9. Can a dish run away? | 9. | −c |
| 10. Can a girl run and jump? | 10. | +c |
| 11. Can a goat talk? | 11. | −c |
| 12. Can a dish roll? | 12. | +c |
| 13. Can a fly see you? | 13. | − √ |
| 14. Can a goat eat grass? | 14. | |
| 15. Can a horse run away? | 15. | |
| 16. Can a rabbit fly away? | 16. | |
| 17. Can a fox run fast? | 17. | |
| 18. Can a ball roll away? | 18. | |
| 19. Can the wind blow? | 19. | |
| 20. Can a girl cry? | 20. | |

**These questions should be pasted on a cardboard with space at the right for placing loose sheets of paper. In this way, the questions may be used many times.**

9. Child has difficulties with word recognition:

Probably the most serious problem connected with the mechanics of reading is that concerned with inadequacy in word recognition. Failure to recognize the printed word and inability to attack new words prevent normal development of the other reading skills and materially affect the entire school life of the child.

Teachers usually attribute this deficiency to lack of proper phonetic training or to disinterestedness on the part of the child. To remedy the difficulty they apply the usual methods of instruction more intensively and often meet with success.

### Children Who Have Difficulty With Phonics; Nonreaders

There is, however, one type of child who does not profit by a continuation of the current methods of instruction no matter how skillfully or intensively applied. He seems to need an entirely different approach to reading and a different technique for the mastery of word recognition. The term "nonreader" has been applied to these children of normal mentality who have failed utterly in this elementary reading skill. It is not unusual to find children 9, 10, or even 14 years old who have made no progress at all in reading because of this deficiency.

In experimental work at the University of California at Los Angeles Dr. Grace Fernald's special method for remedial work with nonreaders has been developed. This method discards all teaching of phonics, as such, and makes use of writing words as a basis for fixing recognition. After many words have been written, under the proper conditions, the child seems to develop an association for the sound elements of words and their symbols which enables him to retain the words already learned and to attack new words, and work them out successfully. When he has reached this stage he becomes an independent reader just as does any child taught successfully by a phonic method.

It is important that teachers know that some of the most serious cases among our reading failures are these nonreaders, and that their difficulties can be overcome. The following summary of an article on the method for nonreaders is only suggestive. Teachers interested should read more fully upon the subject before attempting to use the method. See bibliography, page 94, numbers 2 and 6.

TABLE IV.—*Remedial work for nonreaders* [2]

STEPS SUMMARIZED BRIEFLY

Tracing:

1. Teacher writes word for which child asks, on board or on large piece of paper. (If paper is used the writing must be blackboard size.)
2. Child pronounces word and traces with first and second fingers.
3. Word is erased or covered.
4. Child tries to write word on board or on paper *without copy before him.*
5. Repeat the above steps until word is written correctly. Do not call attention to errors.

Writing from script:

1. Teacher writes word as before, pronouncing it and underlining each sound unit. Do not divide the word.
2. Child pronounces the word slowly, looking at each sound unit as he pronounces it.
3. Child tries to write word, without tracing and *without the copy.*
4. Repeats the above process until successful.

(Words written by the teacher on large pieces of paper may be used over and over again by the children.)

Writing from print:

1. Teacher pronounces printed word for the child.
2. Child pronounces it while looking at the word.
3. Child tries to write word without copy before him.
4. Teacher writes word for the child if he is unable to make the transfer from print to script.
5. Child writes again, then identifies the word in print.

Recognition of words without writing them:

1. Child works out new words in print on basis of familiar elements learned through former writing.

Formal reading work:

After the words in a paragraph or story have been studied as described above, and are familiar to the child, he is given the privilege of reading without interruption. This is a part of every day's lesson and offers an opportunity for work on other phases of reading.

Points to be remembered by the teacher:

1. Words are never spelled orally.
2. Words are never broken up into syllables in the writing. "Remember" is never written "re mem ber." The word is written in its natural form and the sound units underlined.
3. The child *never* writes with the copy before him.

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[2] Keller, Helen B., and Fernald, Grace M.: Remedial Work for Nonreaders. Second yearbook of the department of elementary school principals, National Education Association, July, 1923. Vol. II, No. 4, pp. 345-346.

4. Errors are never pointed out to children. Wrong forms are erased or covered without comment upon them.

5. Words written incorrectly are written correctly several times by the child before leaving them. Each writing is covered or erased before the word is rewritten.

No teacher will have a group of nonreaders or even two or three of them. (In many large schools only one or two are discovered after a thorough survey.) However, there are in every group children who are slow to master words, and much of the procedure suggested for the more serious cases is helpful for these slow ones.

### Comprehension and Interpretation

Valuable suggestions for remedial work in the various reading skills related to comprehension are to be found in recent books on the subject of reading. (See Bibliography, p. 94.) The following suggestions from several different sources may be helpful in outlining procedure in this phase of remedial work.

Reading difficulties which involve comprehension are listed by Anderson and Davidson, in Reading Objectives, as follows:

1. Inability to select the essential idea.
2. Inability to follow printed or written directions.
3. Inability to locate data.
4. Inability to summarize.
5. Inability to draw valid conclusions or answer thought questions.

In the twenty-fourth yearbook similar items are given, together with the following:

1. Inability to recognize relevant material or equivalent ideas.
2. Inability to outline, organize, select ideas.
3. Gross misconceptions and misinterpretations of reading matter.
4. Inability to reproduce substance of material read with oral fluency.

The above-named inabilities are in great measure due to lack of specific instruction toward these goals. For years training in comprehension consisted of practice in reading orally or silently followed by reproduction of the material read. Skill in locating data, summarizing, drawing valid conclusions was acquired indirectly through demands made in other subjects rather than as a result of specific training in each phase of the work. Good readers succeed fairly well in acquiring these skills, but a definite attack on each phase of the thoughtful processes would develop more efficiency on the part of these good readers as well as train the average and slow reader for better methods of study.

Classroom teachers everywhere realize the inability of pupils to read and interpret independently. The low scores made on reasoning in arithmetic are probably due to inability to read and interpret problems rather than to poor reasoning power. Inability to follow written

directions adequately is a common fault of children in every grade in almost every locality.

Remedial work in this phase of reading consists chiefly in a change of procedure so as to include special training in each type of activity listed above. For suggestions as to methods for such procedure the teacher is referred to books listed in the bibliography on page 94. (See particularly Nos. 1, 4, 5, 10.)

### Library Reading for Children Uninterested in Reading

One of the major objectives of our reading program is to so develop the love of good reading that it will carry on into adult life and result in habitual use of books for recreatory purposes. What to do for the small child who early in his school life has turned against books and reading is the real problem. Much talking about the pleasure to be gotten from reading good stories seems to avail little or nothing. Having stories read to him is interesting and pleasing, but helps little in inducing him to read for himself. A different plan of procedure seems necessary.

First, a study of the reason for this attitude against reading is helpful. Few good readers have such an attitude, so it undoubtedly starts with an inability to get the thought from the printed page. For children who have not mastered the mechanics of reading in the early grades, all reading becomes increasingly difficult as they advance from year to year until the task grows hopelessly beyond them.

Remedial work, then, should begin with some plan to reduce the task to the powers of the child and increase the difficulty as his powers develop, with some means of measuring his growth so that he may be conscious of his accomplishment.

As a means to this end a definite plan of encouraging library reading or independent out-of-school reading on the part of the child who dislikes reading should be begun. A short story which the teacher is sure the child can read should be given to him to read at home, preferably when he asks for it. When he reports having read it, a definite check up should be made by the teacher to see if he has really read it thoughtfully; then a systematic way of recording it should be followed.

A variety of suggestions for checking the reading of children has been given on pages 49-58, and will not be repeated here. Those which stimulate library reading are most valuable for general use as well as for use with individual children who dislike reading.

## B. SELF-DIRECTED PRACTICE MATERIALS FOR THE PRIMARY UNIT[3]

Teachers will find that purposeful activities provide many individual problems for which children will need a "work period." Many of these problems will call for quiet individual study. Children will be

[3] This section was prepared and contributed by Miss Nell Hamilton, assistant professor of education, State Teachers College, Fresno.

helped to learn how to study if the teacher provides definite times in the program when they may work on their problems, when additional efforts may be made to learn to read, to spell needed words, and to acquire other techniques necessary for carrying out their purposes. The teacher may also help by providing practice materials related to the particular individual difficulties and at such times she may conveniently carry on any other work with part of her group that may require a quiet room.

Practice materials are much more stimulating and valuable to the child if they relate to the larger activities or individual enterprises in which he is engaged and interested. In all cases where it is possible, therefore, it is better for the teacher to prepare these materials (using the children's help whenever she can) from the children's actual experiences. To do this requires careful thought, considerable ingenuity, and time and is not always possible for the teacher with large groups. There are available commercial materials for such purposes, some of which are interesting and challenging to the child. By careful selection the teacher may find those which relate to the large activities undertaken by her group or individual children.

The purpose of this section is to help the teacher in the preparation and selection of such materials. No attempt has been made to give an exhaustive list of published materials, but a brief list of materials which have been found in trial by a group of teachers [1] to be very helpful has been included.

The discussion of these practice materials will follow this outline:

I. Criteria for evaluating materials.
II. Care of materials.
III. Checking child's use of materials.
IV. Equipment needed for preparation of materials.
V. Suggestions for teacher-made materials.

## I. Criteria for Evaluating Practice Materials

(*a*) The material should be attractive in appearance as well as interesting in content.

(*b*) It should progress in difficulty and should provide for individual differences.

(*c*) It should help to promote desirable abilities in all the subjects.

(*d*) It should provide for self-help.

(*e*) The problems should challenge effort, but should not discourage because of too great difficulty.

(*f*) The goals should be reached in a reasonable length of time.

[1] Indebtedness is expressed to Miss Marjorie Brewster, principal of Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, Fresno, to Miss Oba Algeo, primary supervisor in Fresno County schools, and to the following committee from Fresno city schools for looking over, grading, and trying out materials: Miss Hattie E. Janes, Mrs. Perle D. Cook, Miss Florence Franscini, Miss Bessie McDonald, Mrs. Ruth Cobb, and Miss Ernestine Hough. Appreciation is also expressed for the many samples sent by publishers.

(*g*) It should require no desk writing in the first year, and only a small amount during succeeding years.

(*h*) To provide ease in handling as well as desirability, it should be placed on heavy material such as oak tag.

(*i*) Provision should be made for checking to prevent slovenly habits, and for record keeping. Pupil's participation in record keeping adds to the satisfaction of the accomplishment.

## II. Care of Materials

(*a*) The problem of caring for the material must be met lest the appearance of the room be marred by disorder. A table, locker, vertical file, shelf, or box in which material may be filed is advisable. A series of cloth pockets to be hung under the bulletin board is convenient and occupies little space.

(*b*) Cut-up parts should be numbered on the back and kept in a strong envelope attached to the card or folder which bears the corresponding number.

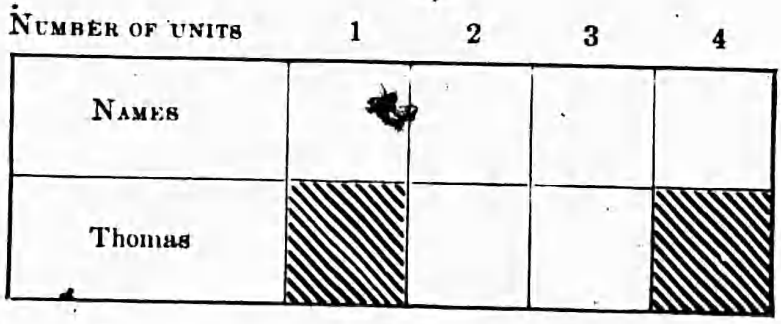
(*c*) Racks for holding the pupil's work prevent the discomfort caused by disarranged work and enable the teacher to preserve the work for later checking. (See Section IV (*j*) for directions for making racks.)

## III. Checking Child's Use of Materials

(*a*) To maintain proper standards and to provide for progression all work should be checked. The following plans are suggested:

1. When a child has completed a unit of work with proper standard he may write his name on a card attached to that unit.

2. If units are numbered, records may be kept on a chart as follows:




As each pupil receives a check for satisfactory accomplishment he colors the square opposite his name and in the column bearing the number of the unit.

## IV. Equipment Needed for Preparing Materials

(*a*) A hectograph, mimeograph, ditto machine, or carbon paper for making multiple copies.

(*b*) A primer-size typewriter might be provided in a large school, or in small systems one may be kept in a central place for use in more than one school. Any typewriter may have primer-size type put on it for about $20.

(*c*) Plenty of oak tag.

(*d*) A roll of 30-inch wrapping paper.

(*e*) Some colored paper for booklet covers.

(*f*) Old magazines and discarded books.

(*g*) A card of Esterbrook printing pens of various sizes.

(*h*) A price and sign marker, type three-eighths to one-half inch in height.

(*i*) A great-primer size printing press with long holder and ink pad for making sentences.

(*j*) A rack for holding children's work may be made as follows:

Heavy sheets of 9 by 12 tag.

Roll of ¾-inch gummed tape.

Beginning on bottom edge and at 1½-inch intervals paste strips of tape as follows:

Fold tape lengthwise, one-fourth of the ¾-inch width down and paste the two gummed surfaces together. This leaves on one side one-fourth inch of gummed surface and one-fourth inch of double tape with gummed faces together. Paste the one-fourth inch of gummed surface on the large card in strips at 1½-inch intervals. This forms about eight folds for holding work. Bind the whole card with gummed tape.

(*k*) If the typewriter is used, double or triple the space between lines.

(*l*) Printing should be carefully done and should conform to proper requirements for close work. Manuscript print is desirable. (See pp. 189–192, in Moore, The Primary School, or Talbott's Manual for Manuscript Print, Harr Wagner Publishing Co.) Print may be slightly larger but not smaller than 18-point Caslon or great primer.

Directions for printing for first grade:

Height of small letters, one-eighth inch. Space between words, width of two letters. Space between base lines, the height of three small letters. Between letters, one-half width of one letter. Length of line, 3½–4½ inches.

Thought units should not be broken at the ends of the lines.

Black on white or cream has the greatest legibility.

(*m*) Cut-out pictures may be used for making folders attractive.

## V. Suggestions For Teacher-Made Materials [5]

*a. Expressive enterprises not involving reading:*

1. Suggest things in which pupils are interested to be represented either with crayola, clay, chalk, in the sand table, or on the floor. L1.

(*a*) A trip you took.
(*b*) What you did during vacation.
(*c*) What you did over a holiday.
(*d*) Things you saw at the fair or circus.
(*e*) What we saw on our excursion.
(*f*) What mother does at home.
(*g*) What father does.
(*h*) Games we play.
(*i*) Our pets and what they can do.
(*j*) What you would like for Christmas.
(*k*) Animals on the farm.
(*l*) Making movies—based on experiences during activities, stories told or read.
(*m*) How I help at home.
(*n*) Making illustrations for charts based on experiences, conversation, work periods as:

Our Christmas plans.
The trip.
Getting ready for school.

Such work as is suggested above provides for the expression of individuality, and offers an opportunity for coordination of hands and of sense perception.

To raise standards and to secure best efforts group conferences should be held on the results. Pupils may select the best for the bulletin board or class book. Labels may also be suggested for the pictures.

Later, under teacher direction, the children may practice writing simple labels at easel or board. These labels may be written with crayola at the board and later pasted into the book.

Ex. Mother cooks. My wagon. L2.

2. Each child may work out his choice of the problems needed for carrying on the group activity. L1–H3.

*b. Practice materials involving reading:*

1. Color chart. L1.

A large chart with circles or oblongs of various colors labeled for reference.

Desk charts, each with colors differently arranged, and with color words in attached envelope for matching.

[5] The letter and numeral following each suggestion indicates the grade level at which the activity has been found suitable. "L" refers to the beginning or "low" group, "H," to the "high" group.

2. Matching game. L1.

Pictures of objects and animals related to class activities under way, or selected from vocabularies of basic books, pasted on cards 3 by 3, with labels. An extra set of labels in envelopes for matching. A few cards without labels to use for testing.

3. Same pictures as above to be matched with sentences containing the label which has previously been learned, as:

This is a *cat*, or

The *cat* likes milk. H1.

4. Folders with a picture at the top of two opposite pages, as cat—dog. In an envelope are sentences which the children may place under the appropriate picture, as:

The cat is gray.

It can bark.

It says "meow." H1.

A progression of difficulty may be provided by changing the sentences from time to time.

5. The above plan may be used later in connection with stories read, group excursions taken, or activities carried on, by putting the names of characters or action involved at the top of opposite pages, as:

*Elves —Shoemaker.*

In the envelope put phrases or sentences, as:

Came at night, danced around the table,

Sold the shoes, was very poor. H1–L2.

6. Directions for drawing and coloring, as:

Draw the pig's house.

Make it brown. L1.

7. Riddles to read, guess, and draw (the children will delight in making suitable riddles themselves):

It has a face.

It has 2 hands.

It tells the time.

Draw it. H1.

8. Pictures pasted, in a folder. Numbered questions related to the pictures, with cut-up answers to match the questions. L1.

9. Words to classify under such headings, as:

*Colors. Things.*

In attached envelope are words as red, hop, green, run, eat, etc. These may be related definitely to class experiences. L1.

10. Words to classify according to initials or endings, as:

*ing. er.*

farmer, running. baker, mother. H1–L2.

11. From old books, cut out small story units and make into little booklets. These may be read by individuals or in small groups. H1.

12. Nursery rhymes printed as a whole under illustrations. Same rhyme cut into separate lines for matching. L1.

13. Elliptical sentences related to a picture. Pupils choose words to complete the sentence. To provide self-help the initial of the word may be given, as:

The dog has a ball in his m ————.

Each envelope should include a "joker." L1.

14. Number games:

Cards with different number of objects on them as, 3 balls, 2 rabbits. In envelope figures and words to tell how many with figure and number word. A wall chart or dictionary card may provide self-help. L1.

15. Games to be played by two pupils:

Pictures on one side, name or label on other. The checker, with picture toward him, checks the accuracy of the one who says the words from the other side.

Same game may be played using number combinations, combination without answer on one side, answer on the other. H1.

16. "Yes and no" or "funny and not funny games":

In folder have "yes" at top of one page, "no" at top of other. Pupils place sentences under appropriate heading, as:

A pig can fly.

A cat can sing.

A bird makes a nest. H1–L2.

Change sentences at intervals to provide for a progression of difficulty, and relate them to children's activities and experiences.

17. Dictionary game:

Let each pupil make a dictionary of about eight pages with three columns on each. At intervals, hectograph lists of words the group has found it needs in its activities, to be cut apart and pasted on the appropriate page. H2.

18. Making rhythm book:

Expose a nursery rhyme on the board for the pupils to discover. As soon as a pupil makes this discovery let him illustrate it for the rhyme book. The best may be selected for the class book, or for a book to send to an absent member. L1–H1.

19. Finding little words in big words:

On cards may be placed words which the children have had. They may go to the board and write the little word they find. Both print and script forms may be placed on the card as well as the picture of the object. L2.

20. Cutting out pictures for booklets illustrating some activity in progress, using fashion sheets or advertising material.

Example: Vegetables we know (or eat), furniture we want in our doll house. L1.

21. Keeping individual word book:

Let each child make for himself a book for difficult words. In it are printed by the teacher the words with which he needed help during supervised study.

He may at a remedial period say these to the teacher or to another pupil, or during a quiet period he may write them on the board. The teacher may put a key sentence by each word to facilitate self-help, as: What—What is your name? L2.

22. Additional reading:

Child keeps a browsing book in the desk to read when other work is finished. He prepares to tell or read some story from it to the class or teacher on library day or at story time.

All groups from L1 to H3.

Reading game directed by children. First grade, Lincoln School, San Diego

23. Printing, with the press, labels for the museum or for other purposes. This must be carefully guided at first. Suggestions for guidance:

(*a*) Let child help the teacher.

(*b*) During work period supervise those who wish to make labels.

(*c*) Some careful child may be discovered who can be trusted to work alone and who may be made "foreman of printing."

(*d*) One assistant may be given him, rotating assistants to give others a chance.

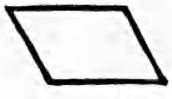
All groups from H1 on.

24. Ear training:

Classify pictures according to initial sound. At top of card put pictures and words with initial sound printed separately, as:

ball

b



red

r

In an envelope put pictures of things to be grouped under appropriate sound, as: Baby, ring, bat, bottle, bell. H1.

25. Confusing words:

Make a card with confusing words listed at the left. In the attached envelope are key sentences which use the word. Children match the proper sentence to each word and read, as:

was—I *was* at home.
saw—I *saw* a bird's nest.
after—
father—
now—
how—
no—I have *no* hat.
on—My hat is *on* the table. H1—L2.

26. Recognition of visual units:

On a card at the top, list words that enter into compound words, as

be—for—any—where.

In an envelope put cards containing compound words to be classified, as: Forget, before, began, everywhere, begin. H1.

27. Phonetic game:

At left of card, list words that may be used with the ending "ing." In envelope put word cards using endings to be placed opposite, as:

run—running.
come—coming.

Later put sentences in envelope using word with ending. Sentences may call for drawing, as:

fly—Make a bird *flying*. H1.

28. Number comprehension:

Make problems appropriate to the children's experience and let them select the sentence appropriate to the meaning. L2.

(*a*) John weighed 68 pounds in March, and 63 pounds 2 months later.

(*b*) John is 4 feet 6 inches and James 4 feet 8 inches tall.

In an envelope sentences from which correct answers may be selected are given, as:

John had lost.
John had gained.
John was taller.
John was shorter.

29. On approximately 4 by 6 sheets of oak tag make riddles of three to four lines, depending on ability of class. They may be about objects, and may use the vocabulary built up through activities or of book. Each child may have a different riddle to study and read orally to the group to guess. This provides a motive for audience reading.

Ex. I am black and white.
I live in a barn.
I give milk.
I am as big as a horse.
What am I? H1.

30. Game to be played by three children:

Paste a number of pictures on cards of uniform size. Print a group of sentences on tag slips, having each sentence describe a picture. One pupil may then read a sentence while the other two see who can select the picture described by the sentence. This is a very good game for language-handicapped children.

New groups of sentences may be made for the same pictures as the children progress.

Ability to distinguish between different pronouns, between plurals and singulars, etc., may be increased by use of such pictures and sentences. For example, sentences might be made to describe pictures of situations such as the following:

*She* is sweeping.

*He* is sweeping. L2.

c. *Teacher-made work books related to a text:*

1. The type of material here described has great value in the following respects:

(*a*) It provides a thorough check, for each pupil does *all* the work.

(*b*) It is well adapted to the development of individual pupils, for each pupil may progress at his own rate in that particular material. It thus helps the teacher avoid the tendency to teach to the group of average ability and neglect the other children.

(*c*) The material provides for steady development.

(*d*) It provides interesting work leading to development of desirable work and character habits such as independence, thoroughness, attention to self-improvement, joy of mastery, initiative.

(*e*) The work may be made to provide for growth along several lines; *e. g.*, vocabulary, organization, comprehension, judgment.

2. Suggestions for preparation of work books:

(*a*) Committees of teachers may prepare these work books, basing them on the texts in use. It is best to use simple techniques throughout so that children will not have difficulty in understanding the procedures involved. An example of each procedure should be given wherever possible. To make the work self-directive, a uniform scheme for numbering, etc., should be adopted.

(*b*) Each child may be provided with a copy through the use of the multigraph.

(*c*) In the low first, high first, and low second grades, each child should work on the copy provided for him. Older children may give their answers on separate sheets of paper. If the children are working individually, a few copies of the directions only will be needed. If several children are working on a book but at different rates, a few copies of each page of instructions may be used, kept in a vertical file. When the child finishes a unit of work he consults the file for the sheet which provides a check on his work. His answer sheets may be kept to be made into a booklet.

3. Suggested techniques:

(*a*) Coloring large pictures; silent reading of directions. L1.

(*b*) Cutting out and pasting words on spots indicated on large pictures. L1.

(*c*) Drawing lines to indicate relationships between words and picture, sentences and picture, or between different words. H1.

(*d*) Indicating answers by numbering or underlining. (Multiple choice.) H2.

(*e*) Reading riddles and illustrating them by drawing pictures. H1.

(*f*) Carrying out directions for drawing. L1; H1.

(*g*) Completing sentences; words are selected by child from a given list and written in blanks indicated. L2; H2.

(*h*) Arranging statements in order of thought sequence. The order should be indicated by numbers. This provides practice in organizing. H2; L3.

(*i*) Answering questions by a phrase or word. L3.

(*j*) Answering "yes" or "no" questions related to text. L2.

(*k*) Dividing story into main topics which are suggested. Subtopics should be selected from a list by the child and put under proper headings. This also provides for growth in ability to organize thought L3; H3.

(*l*) Selecting from a list a word or phrase which means the same as an underlined word in the sentence. L3.

(*m*) Choosing best answers. Prepare list of questions with list of related answers or quoted paragraphs designated by titles. Children should select best answers. This aids in developing discrimination. H3.

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NOTE.—Those books preceded by an asterisk are exceptionally valuable.

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## TEACHERS' GUIDE TO CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Office of Education Bulletin, 1930, No. 26

Many classroom pictures illustrate this manual for kindergarten and primary teachers developed under the direction of the California Curriculum Commission, California State Department of Education

Order from the Superintendent of Documents
United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

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